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CLAREMONT

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A Journal of Political Thought and Statesmanship

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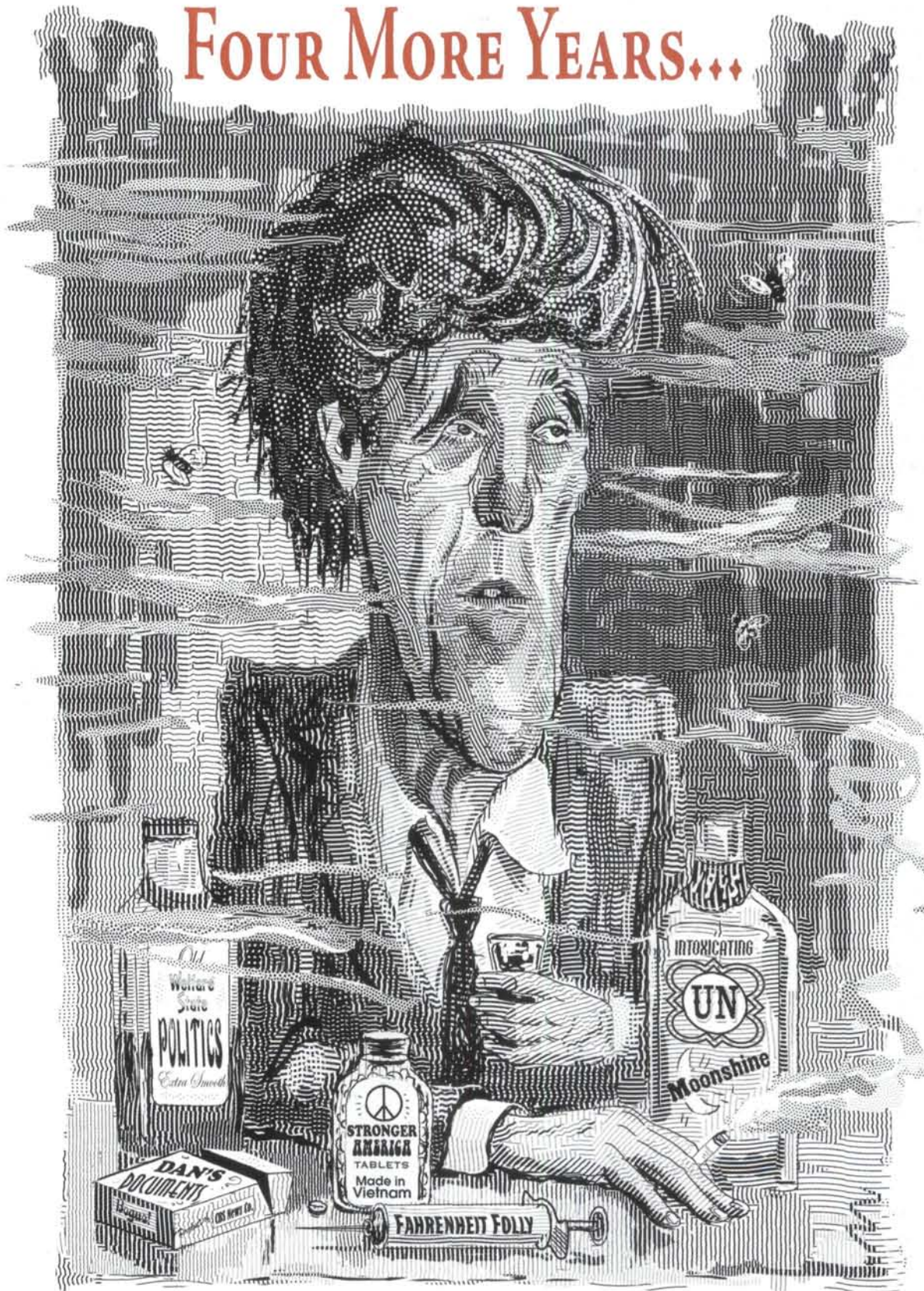
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THE CHIEF JUSTICE AND THE CONSTITUTION

by Charles R. Kesler

WE WISH CHIEF JUSTICE WILLIAM REHNQUIST WELL IN HIS fight against thyroid cancer, and hope that he will be able to return to the bench soon. Even the *New York Times* seems to have caught the spirit, editorializing not long ago in support of Rehnquist's "proud record of defending the independence of the federal judiciary against intrusive attacks by politicians." Conservative politicians, that is.

The occasion was the Chief Justice's nineteenth—"and potentially final," the *Times* noted cheerily—annual report on the federal judiciary. In it, he showed "appropriate concern" over the bugaboo that frightens the *Times* even more than recent presidential elections: the "mounting criticism of judges for engaging in...judicial activism." Those are his words, and his scare quotes.

While acknowledging that congressional criticism of judges and judicial decisions is "as old as our republic," Rehnquist drew the line at recent suggestions to impeach judges for decisions "regarded by some as out of the mainstream." In addition, he criticized several bills introduced in the last Congress that would limit the federal courts' appellate jurisdiction.

It is awkward but, alas, necessary to point out that the Chief Justice's arguments are hardly persuasive. For example, he announces that "Congress's authority to impeach and remove judges should not extend to decisions from the bench." That principle, he claims, was established two centuries ago by Congress's unsuccessful attempt to remove Justice Samuel Chase. Though impeached, he was not convicted. "From that day to this," Rehnquist declares, the political rule has been that "a judge's judicial acts may not serve as a basis for impeachment."

Now, the Chase precedent by itself creates no such rule, though as with the similar outcome in President Clinton's impeachment, it reinforces the presumption against bringing such actions unless the offenses are grave. Still, one has to ask: Are there *no* decisions by a federal judge, however contemptuous of the Constitution or the other branches, that might warrant impeachment?

Rehnquist apparently does not think so, though his argument depends on a political, not constitutional, rule, and one rather breezily asserted, at that. By contrast, when Alexander Hamilton in *The Federalist* asked what are the safeguards against judicial "encroachments on the legislative authority," he cited "the important constitutional check which

the power of instituting impeachments...would give to [Congress] upon the members of the judicial department." In fact, wrote Hamilton, "This is alone a complete security. There can never be a danger that the judges, by a series of deliberate usurpations on the authority of the legislature, would hazard the united resentment" of the very body that could punish the judges' "presumption by degrading them from their stations."

Well, Hamilton may have been wrong about the last point, because judges have been usurping legislative authority for decades, and the Congress has let them. For most of that time, Congress was handily Democratic and happy to let the judiciary carry the ball. Had a truly indignant Congress flexed its constitutional muscles once or twice, judicial activism might have subsided long ago.

OF COURSE, NO ONE IS SUGGESTING THAT CONGRESS SUBSIST on a regular diet of impeachments. Rehnquist is correct that such a course would imperil judicial independence. But the courts are not supposed to be independent of the Constitution, and Congress should not be cowed into thinking that there is little or nothing it can do about that.

For example, there is its power to regulate and make exceptions to the Supreme Court's appellate jurisdiction. It's right there in Article III, section 2.

And the ordinary method of disciplining the courts is through the appointment process. This is the only method of which Rehnquist approves, at least in this report. He says nothing at all about constitutional amendments as a way to save the Constitution from the judges, despite the fact that several amendments, beginning with the 11th, have been adopted for that very reason.

In the end, Rehnquist seems uncomfortable with almost any constitutional rebuke of the judiciary, which is a shame for someone who used to be one of its most incisive critics. He is still a step or two away from Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's position, that any popular or legislative protest of the courts' mistakes is *lèse majesté*. Yet more and more, Rehnquist's love of precedent immiures him in liberal precedents, and his love of democracy persuades him to tolerate offenses against the Constitution that have been blessed by a sleeping legislature.

We pray for his speedy recovery, and for the Constitution's, too.

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C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

LINCOLN'S LEGACY

I am grateful indeed for Allen Guelzo's very kind words about my book *Lincoln at Cooper Union* ("Lincoln's Audition," Fall 2004). But he and I differ a bit on contemporary politics (I am, as he points out, a former press aide to Mario Cuomo), and so I am not surprised that he takes issue with my contention that Lincoln's 1860 pre-presidential address was not as "conservative" as many biographers later asserted.

Yes, Lincoln told his New York audience that true conservatism meant "adherence to the old and tried, against the new and untried." But Lincoln's "conservative" comment is most accurately read as a wry aside within a complex tapestry embracing history lesson, sermon, and tongue-in-cheek irony, coming amidst endless repetitions of the reminder that the founders who framed the government understood the slavery question as well as, or better than, Americans of Lincoln's era. As they say: you had to be there. Certainly it is somewhat misleading to isolate this one direct reference to conservatism as an indication of a retrograde posture on slavery—the conclusion that Prof. Guelzo's comment invites us to draw.

I think Prof. Guelzo and I basically agree that Abraham Lincoln desired to see the stain of slavery removed from the fabric of American life, even if Lincoln was not prepared to join the abolitionist movement whose brave adherents were excluded from the country's political mainstream. Yet Lincoln was not judged so "conservative" in 1860 that pro-slavery Southerners resisted breaking up the Union before he could even be inaugurated. The fact that Lincoln went on to write the freedom document that transformed America suggests a posture that was, by the standards of his own time, something quite a bit more daring and advanced than the word "conservative," absent appropriate context and nuance, suggests to modern readers. Lincoln's Cooper Union audience left the hall that night "whooping it up" over the prospect that enlightened anti-slavery positions would prevail—that nothing else was right—and that, ultimately, "right makes might." Conservative? I still think not.

Harold Holzer
Rye, NY

Allen C. Guelzo replies:

Only a New York Democrat could complain about a complimentary review for its one gentle refusal to co-operate in Mr. Holzer's project to de-conservatize Abraham Lincoln. It may give

Mr. Holzer no lost sleep to find himself joining arms with Pat Buchanan and Lyndon LaRouche in denying Lincoln's conservatism, but Holzer's unwillingness to allow Lincoln's name to appear on the conservative lineup card is a fairly good marker of how dismayed the American Left is to see the Great Emancipator batting against them—which he does, Holzer's arm-waving demurrer notwithstanding.

Mr. Holzer's idea that Lincoln's self-description as a conservative was "a wry aside" falls down laughing at itself, partly because (as his own book is entirely consumed with illustrating) the Cooper Union speech was Lincoln's campaign debut in front of an audience of dour Eastern Republicans who were as yet unconvinced that this ex-Whig should be taken seriously; and partly because of the way Lincoln uses the term conservative in so many other places. In 1841, Lincoln chided his fellow Whigs in the Illinois state legislature for failing to act "upon conservative principles." In his second debate with Douglas, he endorsed the abolition of the interstate slave trade only "upon some conservative principle." In Columbus in 1859, he defined the "chief and real purpose of the Republican party" as "eminently conservative" because "it proposes nothing save... that which the original framers of the government themselves expected and looked forward to." And on the very day he was assassinated, he wrote James van Alen to thank him for "the assurance you give me that I shall be supported by conservative men like yourself." The fact that it is Lincoln who says these things embarrasses Mr. Holzer—and so we are asked to redefine what was meant by conservative.

Yes, I know terms like conservative and liberal, not to say moderate, can be wax noses. And certainly today, Mr. Holzer and I would both condemn slavery as retrograde, reactionary, and a violation of natural law. But that's how I would also characterize most of the policies of the Left—as an infantile nostalgia for pre-capitalist communitarianism, an unctuous

plea for diversity fascism (whether the diversity of race or class or soil), and a terror of mobility and liberty in preference for stasis and subsidy. These were, moreover, exactly the characteristics of the slave South, and exactly what made the Confederacy into what Raimondo Luraghi once called "the first modern experiment in state socialism." I accept the term conservative for myself because I am in favor of conserving the most revolutionary and transformative power in modern history—classical, liberal, democratic capitalism—whereas the Left invites us to restore a rigid state-sponsored hierarchy which it lauds as "fair" and "progressive." "Free labor," Lincoln said, "is the just and generous, and prosperous system, which opens the way for all—gives hope to all, and energy, and progress, and improvement of condition to all." This is what George Fitzhugh denied, and what the Left has always denied. If Holzer would like to get right with Lincoln, he could best do so by declaring himself a conservative, and leaving the fear of "improvement" to be reshaped for modern consumption by the likes of Mario Cuomo, Bella Abzug, and Hillary Clinton.

ROOSEVELT'S RECORD

I thank Robert Eden for his very generous review of my book ("FDR as Statesman," Fall 2004). My only significant dissent from his article is his reaction to my treatment of Roosevelt's economic policy. I devoted most of seven chapters and much of two others to the Depression and Roosevelt's response to it, not just five chapters as Mr. Eden asserted. I also presented, for the first time in any book about Roosevelt I have seen, a serious comparison between the economic performance of the New Deal and contemporary policies in other advanced nations. If the New Deal workfare participants are considered as employed people, as the military draftees and defense workers in most of the main European countries at the time generally are, as people similarly put to work in government occupations, then Roosevelt's performance is much better than is usually thought.

Mr. Eden (as well as Gregory L. Schneider and Richard Vedder in immediately following reviews of books about the Depression in America) falls victim to the myth that unemployment continued in double digits in the United States up to the country's entry into World War II and that British, French, and German economic policies were (implicitly) more successful than Roosevelt's. It is true that

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Roosevelt was not much interested in economics, and that continued spending and lower taxation were the surest and fastest cures to the Depression. Roosevelt partially grasped this, but judged it necessary to outflank the extremists with a start on a social safety net and with rather hollow gestures of taxing the wealthy, and then to placate the fiscally conservative majority of Americans with his famous "breathing space" from September 1935 to April 1938.

Of course the NIRA was nonsense, which is why Roosevelt was not very upset when it was struck down by the Supreme Court, but Roosevelt tacked sensibly through very treacherous political waters, all the while shuffling his political alliances as he shifted policy. Unemployment had descended from over 30% in 1933 to under 10% on Election Day 1940. By Pearl Harbor, there was virtually no unemployment in the United States, by any measurement. The final phase of the New Deal was the G.I. Bill of Rights, which (posthumously for Roosevelt) effectively elevated much of the American working class into the middle class.

As economics, the New Deal earns a competitive, passing grade. As sociological and economic disaster avoidance, it was a near-perfect score.

Conrad Black
New York, NY

Richard Vedder replies:

I do not know where Conrad Black is getting his unemployment statistics, but they are certainly different from those of anyone else. It is true that there are issues of definition, for example of how to treat workers on government relief programs. But even allowing for that, the statements of Mr. Black are somewhat curious. The official Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimate of 1933 unemployment is 24.9%, not the "over 30%" suggested by Black. Lowell Gallaway and I have done monthly estimates centered around the annual BLS estimates (in *Unemployment and Government in Twentieth-Century America*), and we estimate that unemployment peaked at 28.3% in March of 1933, a fair amount below "over 30%." Similarly, the statement that unemployment was below 10% on Election Day 1940 is not true as conventionally measured, although perhaps it would be under the Black definition. The statement that unemployment was "virtually" non-existent at the time of Pearl Harbor "by any measurement" is also untrue. The annual unemployment estimate of the BLS for 1941 is 9.9%, and 4.7% in 1942. It seems likely that the BLS unemployment rate for December 1941 was well over 6% (since unemployment rates clearly fell during 1942, suggesting that they were much

higher than 4.7% at the beginning of the year). My guess is the rate on December 7, 1941 was about 7%. There are some monthly government estimates for this period, but they are not based on the Current Population Survey (as they have been since 1947). The probable December 1941 rate, while low by Depression standards, was nonetheless well above the median of the period 1900-1929 (the era immediately preceding the Depression).

Mr. Black seems to understate the slowness of the U.S. recovery. A more comprehensive measure of economic activity would be real total output (GDP or GNP). The U.S. totals show little change from 1929 to 1939, while there are healthy increases in the two largest European economies, Britain and Germany. On a per capita basis, the U.S. numbers show a very small increase (given some population growth). The conventional wisdom that the U.S. economy's recovery was sluggish both absolutely and relative to major industrial competitors seems to be supported by the official statistics. Certainly the frenetic Hoover-Roosevelt efforts to get us out of the depression were far less successful than the largely laissez-faire policies followed by an incapacitated Woodrow Wilson and by Warren G. Harding in the 1920-22 Depression, which was more severe than the 1929 downturn after even seven quarters, as measured by industrial production.

Robert Eden replies:

I recommended Conrad Black's study strongly, arguing that his portrait of FDR's capacities should be adopted as the indispensable starting point for all serious study of FDR's statesmanship, both in domestic and in foreign affairs. I urged readers to welcome the great controversy that his book reopens, after sketching some of the major topics which must be considered in the course of that controversy. I am pessimistic that the public will take up the controversy, however, based on the eagerness of reviewers either to sidestep all serious dispute with Black's book over the New Deal years, or to narrow their dispute to one over statistics. By a "great controversy" I did not mean a specialized quarrel among economic historians looking backward, but a national political dispute over decisions that have yet to be settled, in which of course economists should play some part. Whatever our disagreements on particulars, Lord Black and I both mean to widen the historical horizon of current debate on urgent public questions, by showing that FDR is at the origin of our most important political controversies. We agree that

FDR is still at their center, because he was the chief architect of the free world in our time, and of the American regime which is the free world's center of gravity.

JEFFERSON VS. HAMILTON

Although Lance Banning is right to defend Jefferson against the sanctimonious criticisms of modern-day radical abolitionists in the academy ("Three-Fifths Historian," Fall 2004), I must take issue with Banning's claim that Jefferson was arguably the most influential foe of slavery of his generation. As one of those "misguided" scholars who has helped "to identify the Federalists as antislavery heroes," I believe that a stronger case can be made that Alexander Hamilton was a more consistent and ultimately more influential foe of slavery than was Jefferson. Indeed, Hamilton's record on the issue stands in stark contrast to Jefferson's. Hamilton made the extraordinary claim (for his generation) that the "faculties [of Negroes] are probably as good as ours." He founded the New York Manumission Society, which not only helped to end slavery in New York (which had the largest slave population north of the Mason-Dixon line), but also set up a school to educate free blacks. He defended the Jay Treaty's implicit denial of Southern claims against Great Britain for seizing and freeing American slaves at the end of the Revolutionary War. He advised Timothy Pickering to open cordial relations with the Negro republic of Haiti. He furnished an alternative economic vision—an industrial rather than agrarian republic—that would make slavery unnecessary. And Hamilton set forth an interpretation of the Constitution that would enable the federal government to preserve the Union and to restrict the spread of slavery (unlike Pickering and Jefferson, Hamilton never succumbed to sectionalism).

To be sure, strengthening the Union, not eliminating slavery, was Hamilton's highest political priority, but Hamilton knew full well that the former was the *sine qua non* for the latter. Indeed, if we follow Harry V. Jaffa's description of two of the critical tasks of statesmanship—selecting the best means for producing the intended result and not saying or doing anything that might hinder future statesmen from more perfectly attaining the aim—it is more plausible to contend that Jefferson's support for agrarianism, states' rights, and diffusing slavery across the nation caused him to fail miserably at these tasks. This, I believe, is why Abraham Lincoln singled out Hamilton for being among "the most antislavery men of those times" and not Jefferson.

Michael D. Chan
Los Angeles, CA

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Lance Banning replies:

Alexander Hamilton was certainly an admirable and influential figure, whose stands on slavery and race were, indeed, less conflicted than Jefferson's. But not all consequences are intended, and it remains hard for me to see that any of Hamilton's deliberate actions were as influential as those that Jefferson took. Certainly, moreover, it was by no means Hamiltonian principles to which Lincoln and other anti-slavery advocates ordinarily looked for inspiration.

WELFARE RIGHTS

I am grateful to R. Shep Melnick for his generous, fair, and mainly accurate review of my book ("The Price of Rights," Fall 2004), and write to make one clarification. Melnick says that my "goal is straightforward; he wants the Supreme Court to revivify the eligibility- and benefit-expanded constitutional doctrines advocated... in the halcyon days of the late Warren Court." He adds that I think "we should jettison Roosevelt's well-founded distrust of judicial activism."

I think no such thing. Under the influence of Melnick himself (among others), I stand with Roosevelt, not activist judges. Like FDR, I believe that the Second Bill should have a place akin to that of the Declaration of Independence, as a catalogue of the nation's deepest commitments, protected by citizens rather than by courts. My discussion of the Warren Court is intended not to justify an active judicial role, but to help explain why FDR's Second Bill of Rights has not become part of our constitutional understanding. I come down against constitutional change for America, and while I try to provide a balanced view of constitutional welfare rights, my bottom line is against them, at least for us.

Cass R. Sunstein
University of Chicago

♦

Disregarding all that I say to the contrary, Prof. Melnick's review of my book reduces my central ambition to a case for "welfare rights." He ignores almost all of my arguments, and distorts both the substance and the spirit of the conclusions that flow from them.

Melnick charges me with treating constitutional institutions as "merely instrumental" (with his emphasis on "merely"), ignoring my argument that when these institutions work as intended, they represent moral and intellectual virtues that are ends in themselves. Calling me "quirk[y]" for neglecting Franklin Roosevelt (whom, contrary

to Prof. Melnick's puzzling assertion, I never identify as a Hobbesian), he ignores my reliance on thinkers in the Aristotelean and Lockean traditions, statesmen like Lincoln and the authors of *The Federalist*, and constitutional scholars like Martin Diamond and Herbert Storing—writers who have more to say than FDR about either welfare or the Constitution, my stated subjects.

My view of the Constitution is markedly different from that of Prof. Melnick and mainstream scholars generally. Left or Right, their constitutionalism is one chiefly of negative liberties; mine is a positive or ends-oriented constitutionalism. At no point do I deny (in fact I affirm) that state programs can cause dependencies that are antithetical to the well-being of their intended beneficiaries. Nor do I deny that programs like vouchers and tax-exempt savings accounts can be crafted to serve the legitimate needs of people in a manner that promotes personal responsibility, an element of personal well-being. Against conventional wisdom, however, and without successful refutation to date, I argue for a constitutional duty to assess such programs by our best understanding of the general welfare. I argue for this constitutional duty because I think it is a demonstrable truth of the American Constitution and because I think awareness of it will improve American political practice.

Sotirios A. Barber
University of Notre Dame

R. Shep Melnick replies:

I am delighted to learn that Cass Sunstein's "bottom line" is opposition to judicial recognition of welfare rights. This leaves me puzzled about why he devotes most of the second half of his book to showing that this practice is both common and workable. Sunstein engages in elaborate bobbing and weaving on this issue. For example, he writes, "It would not be at all implausible for the Constitution to be construed to protect some or all of the second bill of rights.... I am not suggesting that the Constitution should be interpreted to include all or most of the second bill. I am only describing a possible path" (p. 152). On page 176: "But even in America, there is an argument for constitutional change, and one of my goals is to suggest that this argument is far more plausible than it might seem at first glance." On page 215: "The situation in New York... suggests that a degree of judicial enforcement of the second bill is indeed possible—that courts can take some steps toward protecting desperate needs while also respecting reasonable judgments by the legislature." And this from the final paragraph of the final chapter: "The South African experience shows that some of the strongest objections to constitutionaliz-

ing the second bill are misconceived. If courts are asked to protect the rights that Roosevelt identified, they have sensible ways to do so." As Senator Kerry might have put it, Sunstein did argue for welfare rights—but only after he argued against them.

Prof. Barber accuses me of distorting the "substance and spirit" of his argument. I will concede that trying to get a handle on the "substance and spirit" of this book is like playing Whack-A-Mole at an amusement arcade: just when you think you have drawn a bead on one of the author's arguments, it suddenly vanishes only to reappear elsewhere in another form.

Still, it is undeniable that Barber's mode of constitutional interpretation "treats constitutional provisions not as authoritative in themselves, but as means to the end of the Preamble" (p. 101). The only part of the Preamble that merits Barber's attention is the "general welfare" clause, which he reads to incorporate a "promise of equal political and economic opportunity for all and an adequate level of well-being for every child and every adult who is or was willing to make... 'reasonable effort in their own behalf'" (p. 119). Since the institutions created by our Constitution seem to be chronically incapable of achieving these lofty goals, the Constitution (or at least everything after the Preamble) must be judged a failure (pp. 118-9, 152, 154) and even "cease to be effective law" (p. 155). I cannot conceive of a better way to convince judges (and legislators and citizens) to ignore the words of the Constitution in favor of vague egalitarian sentiments that can be pulled out of the magical hat of the Preamble.

HARLAN'S "HYPOCRISY"

Michael M. Uhlmann's citation of Justice Harlan's opinion in *Cumming v. Richmond County Board of Education* ("Reply to Harry V. Jaffa," Fall 2004) does not prove that Harlan was insincere in his belief that the Constitution was "color-blind." Harlan's opinion did not uphold, as Uhlmann claims, "a Georgia school board's right to create segregated schools." In his opinion for a unanimous court, Harlan wrote that "[i]t was said at the argument that the vice in the common school system of Georgia was the requirement that the white and colored children of the State be educated in separate schools. But we need not consider that question in this case. No such issue was made in the pleadings."

There was no public high school system in Richmond County, Georgia. Instead, the county operated or subsidized a small number of schools, and all high schools in Richmond County—both private and public—charged tuition. The school board decided to close one black high school attended by sixty boys and devote the financial saving to the maintenance

of black grammar schools. There was no publicly subsidized high school for white boys and the only remaining publicly subsidized high school was for white girls. Harlan reasoned that "[t]he appropriation of a portion of the taxes for a white girls' high school is not more discrimination against these colored plaintiffs than it is against many white people in the county. A taxpayer who has boys and no girls of a school age has as much right to complain of the unequal distribution of the taxes to a girls' high school as have these plaintiffs."

The remedy that the plaintiffs requested was that public money be withdrawn from the white girls' school or that the school be closed. Harlan pointed out, however, that "[t]he colored school children of the county would not be advanced in the matter of their education by a decree compelling the defendant board to cease giving support to a high school for white children. The board had before it the question whether it should maintain under its control, a high school for about 60 colored children or withhold the benefits of education in primary schools from 300 colored children of the same race.... Its decision was in the interest of the greater number of colored children, leaving the smaller number to obtain a high school education in existing private institutions at an expense not beyond that incurred in the high school discontinued by the board."

Harlan could have played the part of a judicial activist and ignored the pleadings and decided on grounds not before the court. Perhaps this would have relieved him of any suspicion of "hypocrisy"—but he would have been able to do so only in dissent. In *Plessy* the court approved "separate but equal" railway cars. Harlan was able to delay the extension of that doctrine to publicly supported schools by convincing his colleagues that the issue of "separate but equal" was not before the court.

Edward J. Erler

California State University, San Bernardino

LIFE AFTER DEATH

In his thoughtful review of my book ("Mythic Morals," Fall 2004), Thomas Martin asks some tough and central questions about the nature of justice in ancient Greek religion. Why does Zeus say virtually nothing about it in the *Iliad*? Why, when the gods punish human crimes, do they punish the generations for the sins of their fathers? Why does their notion of justice seem primarily to consist of revenge, and why, so often, do they see that it is carried out indirectly, through the agency of men?

There is no way to answer these questions, other than to admit that divine justice is vengeful, that it offers little comfort to mortals, and often

fails to protect the innocent in the course of punishing the guilty. The Athenian lawgiver Solon, in a poem about justice, compares the "vengeance of Zeus" to a sudden thunderstorm that stirs up the sea and wrecks the crops before it moves away and the sunshine returns. Because he is immortal and ageless, Zeus does not necessarily act immediately to punish individual crimes; rather, he takes his time, avenging some wrongs now, and some later.

Prof. Martin finds it hard to imagine why the ancient Greeks could live with a notion of divine justice that offers mortals so little, however realistic it might seem to be when one reflects on the state of human life in the world. He suggests instead that people (then as now) respected justice because they anticipated that they would be punished for their crimes in the life after death.

In the *Odyssey*, where you end up after death has more to do with your status in life than with your conduct. Menelaus, a fairly ordinary performer by heroic standards, ends up in the relatively attractive Elysian Fields because he was the son-in-law of Zeus. Certainly some ancient people believed that they would have a better or worse existence because of what they did or did not do in this life. Initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries could get you into a more comfortable part of the Lower World. Plato at the end of his dialogue "About Justice" (now known as the *Republic*) has an Armenian stranger explain how what you do in life will be rewarded by better or worse forms of reincarnation. It is hard to know how many people (including Plato himself) ever believed this story, or the stories the so-called Orphics told about the afterlife.

Unlike the Egyptians, the Greeks seem to have concentrated on what happened in this life. Their gravestones speak of lost hopes, of promise unfulfilled, of the pain of separation, not of the joy of reunion. For that we have to wait until Christianity comes along, with its promises of rewards and punishments in the next life. One of the main reasons why the new religion began to appeal to the Greeks and Romans is that it offered a hope of redemption in the next world. Such a possibility seems to me to have been largely absent from the traditional religious beliefs of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

Mary Lefkowitz
Wellesley College

Thomas R. Martin replies:

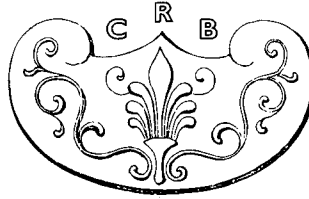
Although I hope that it will have been evident from my review that I admire Mary Lefkowitz's book, I think, to judge from her reply, that there are two important issues on which we disagree. First, I don't think it's right to apply the term "justice," in either an ancient Greek or a modern American sense of the concept, to divine action

that amounts to, as she says, vengeance and frequent harm to innocents. I certainly do agree that it is realistic to see this as the state of human life in this world, but I wouldn't call it justice. My impression is that ancient Greeks believed that justice was the work of human beings, not gods.

Secondly, I don't agree with the standard view, that the idea of rewards and punishments in the next life was largely absent from traditional Greek and Roman religious beliefs. Perhaps we are disagreeing merely about how common such a view was in pre-Christian Greek and Roman civilization, but I think that the evidence from the Eleusinian Mysteries, Orphism, Epicureanism, and various passages in Greek literature suggests this view was not as unusual among "average" people as is generally assumed. For me the unresolved question is how and in what period in Greek history the idea of punishment and reward in the afterlife gained traction. It certainly had by Plato's time, as the *Apology*, *Gorgias*, and *Republic* make clear.

Part of the problem in deciding this issue is how much weight to put on arguments from silence, especially the one about what to make of what people do or do not mention on their gravestones. People buried in my local cemetery would, from a historical perspective, and taken as a group, certainly count as believers in the afterlife—the sign at the entrance to the cemetery reads, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." Of the hundreds of inscribed stones in this location, only a handful have any inscription other than the name of the dead. Not one refers explicitly to what does or does not happen in the afterlife, or indeed to whether there is an afterlife at all. Perhaps one might argue that these people didn't need to refer to the afterlife and its rewards and punishments because anyone visiting the cemetery would realize that they took this idea for granted, but the fact remains that the silence of the gravestones about it would not be a reliable guide to the beliefs of the "traditional" religion of these people.

Finally, I want to say that I firmly believe that there were people then, as there are now, who led virtuous and just lives without believing that an afterlife promises rewards or punishments. What I would like to know more about is what the future prospects are for a world in which a growing number of people, primarily in the "West," seem to be living their lives without a belief that divine judgment will assess their actions and attitudes after their deaths. Since it's even harder to study the future than the past, one of the most fascinating aspects for me of studying classical antiquity is that it offers the best insight that I know of into the morally terrifying challenge of living virtuously and justly either without—or, I would argue—with a belief in eternal rewards and punishments for the dead.



THE ENDLESS PARTY

Essay by William Voegeli

THE EPILOGUE OF A PRESIDENTIAL election is strangely like the opening chapter. Before the primaries there are several candidates. First this one is in the lead, then that one, and finally the party settles on the nominee. After the general election, the party that lost has to make sense of what went wrong. For a while one explanation gains favor, then another, and finally the party settles on the lesson to draw from defeat.

It's been only two months since John Kerry gave his concession speech, but the process of explaining the loss has already had phases. In the first and angriest one, the Democrats blamed the voters. Within two days of the election, Jane Smiley, Maureen Dowd, and Garry Wills (among others) fingered the electorate's stupidity and bigotry as the decisive factor. Although a candid expression of what lots of Democrats really do think, vilifying the people creates problems for a party that might like to win an election at some point in the future.

If it won't do to blame the voters, maybe the thing to do is blame the candidate. A variety of criticisms have been put forward. But few Democrats can work up the anger against Kerry that they directed at Al Gore after the 2000 election or Michael Dukakis in 1988. It's not that Kerry engendered more affection than his predecessors, or that he ran a much better campaign. Instead, the Democrats realize that it's pointless to keep blaming the candidate for the party's defeats.

Certainly, Kerry was not a perfect candidate. No one suitable for Mount Rushmore, however, was running in the Iowa caucuses. It's hard to see how any of the alternatives to Kerry—Howard Dean? Richard Gephardt? Wesley Clark?

—would have done better in November. Political parties don't exist to nominate a new Pericles every four years. Their mission at the presidential level is to provide the institutional resources and political rationale that make it possible to win an election with a nominee who, inevitably, has flaws and makes mistakes.

The Democrats certainly did not lose because they (and allied groups, like MoveOn.org and America Coming Together) failed at the nuts-and-bolts level of finding their voters and getting them to polling places. John Kerry received 6 million more votes than Al Gore. The problem, as Matt Bai explained in the *New York Times Magazine*, is that Democrats have believed from the time of FDR right up to the 2000 election that a majority of Americans agreed with them, were *with* them—and thus they could not lose a high-turnout election.

But in 2004 they registered and brought to the polls every prospective voter they might realistically hope to find—and still lost. It is clear, Bai wrote, that "turnout alone is no longer enough to win a national election for Democrats. The next Democrat who wins will be the one who changes enough minds."

Finding a Narrative

BY THE PROCESS OF ELIMINATION, THEN, a clear front-runner has emerged in the race to explain the 2004 election: the Democrats lost because they couldn't change enough minds. But then, they can't change minds if they don't know their own. Even those who argue that the lack of a clear message was the Kerry campaign's chief problem go on to say that it reflected a larger confusion in the

Democratic Party and, indeed, in American liberalism.

According to Ryan Lizza in the *New Republic*, "the no-message critique is congealing into conventional wisdom." He argues that "the Kerry campaign had a laundry list of policy proposals, or, in the words of James Carville, a litany rather than a narrative." In his *Washington Post* column, Harold Meyerson wrote, "Cover the Democrats for any length of time and you become expert in campaigns that don't seem to be about anything. They have policies; Democrats are good at policies. But all too often the campaigns lack a message—a sense of what the candidate's about and what he aims to do." Ruy Teixeira, the co-author of 2002's *The Emerging Democratic Majority*, a title that sounds ever more forlorn, said in a post-election interview that, "Democrats have to have large and good ideas that people can recognize—ideas voters can sum up in a couple of sentences."

Many of the Democrats attracted to this explanation appear to have spent time in creative writing workshops. Everyone, suddenly, is talking about the crucial importance of the "narrative." "A narrative is the key to everything," according to Democratic pollster Stan Greenberg. Even Senator Kerry's brother, Cam, said, "There is a very strong John Kerry narrative that is about leadership, character, and trust. But it was never made central to the campaign."

The narrative of Democrats trying to find a narrative might be more promising, or at least more interesting, if it were fresher. The problem is the Democrats have lost five of the last seven presidential elections, not to mention control of Congress in 1994, and have talked about the ur-



gent need to redefine and re-explain themselves after every one of those defeats. It has been 24 years since that dim, unelectable extremist Ronald Reagan won a landslide against Jimmy Carter. A generation later, can there really be any promising ideas that haven't already been taken down from the shelf?

More Liberalism, or Less?

HERE IS WHAT THE DEMOCRATS HAVE to show for two-and-a-half decades of introspection, besides a worsening win-loss record: After Walter Mondale lost 49 states in 1984, the Democratic Leadership Council was brought forth, conceived in panic and dedicated to the proposition that a politically viable party must become less liberal. In reaction, various groups and candidates have asserted that the prescription for Democratic victories is to become *more* liberal, to present the voters a choice, not an echo. It's hard to say who will win this tug-of-war, and twice as hard to see how either approach will reverse the Democrats' losing streak.

The only other nostrum has been that of the neo-liberals (once called "Atari Democrats"). To the extent their advice ever came into focus, it was that more liberalism or less liberalism, bigger or smaller government, was not the issue. Making government smarter—more effective, flexible, and responsive—was. Gary Hart nearly wrested the 1984 Democratic nomination from Walter Mondale by baiting him about being beholden to such interest groups as the AFL-CIO. The hot public affairs book after Bill Clinton's victory in 1992 was *Reinventing Government*, now available in a remainder bin near you. Vice President Gore went on the David Letterman show with a hammer, a glass ashtray, and safety goggles to demonstrate something-or-other about how the Clinton Administration was making big government safe for democracy.

Most of the footprints left by neo-liberalism have been washed away; the rest are fading. Bill Clinton, in seeking a Third Way, disparaged the false dichotomy between big and limited government. With the passage of time, Clinton's triangulation looks less and less like a political philosophy and more like a personality disorder, the type afflicting a man who thinks every dichotomy is false. (As Charles Kesler has pointed out, Clinton apparently believed that there was a Third Way between fidelity and adultery, and between telling the truth and lying.) Good government is, in any case, too small and banal an idea to settle the problem of the proper size and scope of the welfare state, and too slender a thread to tie together a majority coalition for the Democratic Party.

Architects, Not Housekeepers

IF THE DEMOCRATS' CURRENT ATTEMPT to figure out what they stand for is going to be more enlightening than their previous efforts, they will have to grapple with fundamental questions, not peripheral ones. The gravity of the situation calls for architects, not housekeepers. The 2004 campaign, after all, was a single episode in a much longer narrative, the story of American liberalism trying to define and advance itself. What's curious is that although intellectual clarity has never been liberalism's strength, for a very long time this confusion did not cause any political problems. Almost forty years ago, the political philosopher Joseph Cropsey observed that while its contradictions were "damaging to liberalism as a theory, [they have] not hindered liberalism as a political movement." "It is instructive," he commented, "to note how wide is the gap between theoretical sufficiency and political efficacy."

The "no message" interpretation of the 2004 election claims that this gap has now closed, finally and completely: liberalism cannot become politically strong again until it stops being so theoretically weak. But Democrats need to recognize how far back, and how far down, liberalism's confusion goes. The notion that liberalism is fundamentally indecipherable was voiced frequently during the 1930s, when liberals absolutely dominated American politics. Raymond Moley, an erstwhile advisor to FDR, wrote of the New Deal in his memoirs, "To look upon these programs as the result of a unified plan, was to believe that the accumulation of stuffed snakes, baseball pictures, school flags, old tennis shoes, carpenter's tools, geometry books, and chemistry sets in a boy's bedroom could have been put there by an interior decorator." In 1940 another New Dealer, the economist Alvin Hansen, admitted, "I really do not know what the basic principle of the New Deal is. I know from my experience in the government that there are as many conflicting opinions among the people in Washington as we have in the country at large."

But the complaint that it's impossible to figure liberalism out has, until recently, typically been voiced by exasperated conservatives. For decades they have watched liberals rushing around with wheelbarrows and ladders, busy, busy, busy at building the welfare state. New programs are created, old ones expanded, urgent needs discovered and rediscovered. Conservatives marvel at this vast construction site and ask prosaic questions: What is this thing going to look like when it's done? How big is it going to be? How will we know when it's finished? And just in case there's any doubt that they *are* conservatives, how much is all this

going to cost?

The replies have not been illuminating. Their major motif has been soaring humbug. In 1943 Archibald MacLeish expressed liberals' hopes about realizing the "America of the imagination":

We have, and we know we have, the abundant means to bring our boldest dreams to pass—to create for ourselves whatever world we have the courage to desire. We have the metal and the men to take this country down, if we please to take it down, and to build it again as we please to build it. We have the tools and the skill and the intelligence to take our cities apart and put them together, to lead our roads and rivers where we please to lead them, to build our houses where we want our houses, to brighten the air, clean the wind, to live as men in this Republic, free men, should be living. We have the power and the courage and the resources of good-will and decency and common understanding... to create a nation such as men have never seen.

One could discount this as rhetoric, considering that MacLeish was a poet by trade. It is, however, language that working politicians relied on as well. President Lyndon Johnson's speech in 1964 calling for the creation of a Great Society "explained" it in these terms:

The Great Society rests on abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice, to which we are totally committed in our time. But this is just the beginning.

The Great Society is a place where every child can find knowledge to enrich his mind and to enlarge his talents. It is a place where leisure is a welcome chance to build and reflect, not a feared cause of boredom and restlessness. It is a place where the city of man serves not only the needs of the body and the demands of commerce but the desire for beauty and the hunger for community.

Is There a Master Plan?

PARSING SUCH BLATHER MIGHT SEEM AS pointless as it is cruel. But MacLeish and Johnson do reveal, inadvertently, truths about liberalism's meaning and its problems. First, conservatives' questions about the welfare state's ultimate size and cost are turned aside by rhetoric that emphasizes the processes and attitudes that go into building it. What's important, liberals say, is that the creation of government

programs to promote social welfare be pursued in a vigorous, confident, optimistic manner, suffused with concern for the vulnerable and respect for the common man, unconstrained by the stifling precepts of the past. (Looking forward to an activist Kennedy presidency after the somnolent Eisenhower Administration, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., wrote, "The '60's will probably be spirited, articulate, inventive, incoherent, turbulent, with energy shooting off wildly in all directions. Above all, there will be a sense of motion, of leadership, of hope.") Conservatives wonder if all this lofty talk is a smoke screen—they wonder, that is, whether there really are blueprints in a safe back at the central office, detailing the vast, Swedish-style welfare state that is liberalism's ultimate goal for America.

The answer is, probably not. If that answer is correct, it then raises this question: Which would be more troubling—the existence or the absence of those blueprints? That is, should conservatives conclude that liberals pose a graver threat to self-government, freedom, and prosperity if they have an ambitious but hidden agenda, or if liberalism has no master plan at all because it is, ultimately and always, an adhococracy?

Liberals have a practical reason why they won't say what they ultimately want, and a theoretical reason why they can't say it. The practical reason is that any usably clear statement of what the welfare state should be would define not only a goal but a limit. Conceding that an outer limit exists, and stipulating a location for it, strengthens the hand of conservatives—with liberals having admitted, finally, that the welfare state can and should do only so much, the argument now, the conservatives will say, is over just how much that is.

Keeping open, permanently, the option for the growth of the welfare state reflects the belief that the roster of human needs and aspirations to which the government should minister is endless. Any attempt to curtail it would be arbitrary and wrong. (In his concession speech after losing to Ronald Reagan in 1984, Walter Mondale listed the groups he had devoted his political career to assisting: "the poor, the unemployed, the elderly, the handicapped, the helpless, and the *sad*" [emphasis added].)

This gets us to the theoretical reason why liberalism cannot incorporate a limiting principle or embrace an ultimate destination. Given humankind's long history of sorrows, most people would consider securing "abundance and liberty for all," ending poverty and achieving racial justice, a pretty good day's work. For LBJ it was, astoundingly, "just the beginning."

Liberal intellectuals who drew up the blueprint for the Great Society regarded peace,

prosperity, and justice as achievements that were not merely modest but troubling. They lived with a strange dread—that if Americans' lives became too comfortable the people would decide that the country had been reformed enough, thank you, even though liberals knew there was still—always—work to be done. In 1943 the National Public Resources Board, which FDR hoped would chart the course for a renewed, enlarged post-war New Deal, advocated the recognition of various welfare rights, including the right to "rest, recreation and adventure." In a speech he gave to the Americans for Democratic Action in 1948, the group's first chairman, Wilson Wyatt, rejected "the view that government's only responsibility is to prevent people from starving or freezing to death. We believe it is the function of government to lift the level of human existence. It is the job of government to widen the chance for development of individual personalities."

How Shall We Live?

THE FEAR THAT LIBERALISM WOULD be thanked for its service and given a gold watch became more acute as the American economy soared after World War II. In 1957, the year before John Kenneth Galbraith published *The Affluent Society*, Arthur Schlesinger tried to redefine liberalism's mission for such a society. He wrote that the New Deal's establishment of the welfare state and Keynesian management of the economy heralded the completion of the work of "quantitative liberalism." Its logical and necessary successor should be "qualitative liberalism," which would "oppose the drift into the homogenized society. It must fight spiritual unemployment as [quantitative liberalism] once fought economic unemployment. It must concern itself with the quality of popular culture and the character of lives to be lived in our abundant society."

To speak of *lifting* the level of human existence suggests that there are higher and lower levels of human existence. Such thoughts imply a certain congruence between modern liberalism and the worldview of classical philosophy and the great monotheistic religions. But, of course, the rejection of those traditions has been crucial to modern liberalism, and to modernism generally. Plato poses, as the central question of philosophy, how shall we live? The liberal response, expressed most directly by John Stuart Mill, is that the question is unanswerable, and the practical imperatives of politics cannot be put on hold forever while philosophers debate it. Therefore, the only realistic answer, one that reflects both the need to find a way to live together and the futility of ascertaining the meaning of the good life, is

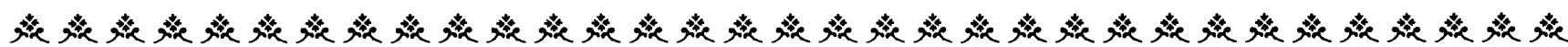
that we should all live however we want, constrained only by the need to choose a "lifestyle" that does not interfere with anyone else's living the way *he* wants to live.

In *A Theory of Justice*, John Rawls argued that "democracy in judging each other's aims is the foundation of self-respect in a well-ordered society." Rawls goes on to say that the person whose aims consist of counting blades of grass should not be denigrated but supported—that is, both praised and publicly subsidized. "Different strokes for different folks" is a meager philosophy, but also a coherent one. If liberals were content to leave it at that, they would at least have one large idea voters could sum up in a couple of sentences.

But they have never been content to leave it at that. Liberalism has never found a way to regard the "character of lives to be lived in our abundant society" with indifference, in the good sense of being tolerant, for fear of also being indifferent in the bad sense of being callous. The social critic inside every liberal cannot resist berating other people's unsatisfactory lifestyles—some are merely inane, others are actually menacing. Fifty years ago this scorn was directed at suburban split-levels. Today the target is evangelical churches. Meanwhile, the social worker inside every liberal cannot resist treating these unfortunate lifestyle choices as problems to be solved.

Meaningless Growth

HOW DOES LIBERALISM SQUARE THIS circle, embracing relativism while declaring that millions of non-liberals are "spiritually unemployed?" (It's hard to imagine anyone being more spiritually unemployed than Rawls's grass-counter.) The moral standpoint from which liberalism passes judgment is one it derives from John Dewey, for whom the highest imperative was "growth." According to political scientist Robert Horwitz, Dewey looked to "the bright promise of an evolutionary understanding of human potentialities, a view which presents boundless possibilities for development." The point of growth is more growth; the only standard by which we judge the direction of past growth is whether it facilitates or stymies future growth. It is in this vein that Johnson spoke of a Great Society where the government will enrich minds, enlarge talents, and concern itself with monitoring our leisure hours to make sure we are constructive and reflective, not bored and restless. It is an agenda for which prosperity, liberty, and justice are "just the beginning," and one which, constantly advancing the constantly evolving goal of personal growth, can have no end.



Bill Clinton was fond of saying that character is “a journey, not a destination.” But to leave home without a destination, convinced that the very idea of a destination is arbitrary and false, is to embark on a “journey” that will be no different from just wandering around. How, then, shall we live? The entirety of liberalism’s answer is, according to Rawls, that it is better to play chess than checkers: “human beings enjoy the exercise of their realized capacities (their innate or trained abilities), and this enjoyment increases the more the capacity is realized or the greater its complexity.” Humans can rescue their lives from meaninglessness by striving, however they pass their days, to employ more rather than fewer of their talents, finding new ones and expanding known ones, to the sole purpose of being able to enlarge them still further, endlessly. We have seen the future, and it’s an adult education seminar, where ever-greater latitude is afforded to ever-smaller souls, and where freedom means nothing higher than the care and feeding of personal idiosyncrasies.

As an ethical precept this position is risible. As the basis for social criticism, it is infuriating. This is the standard by which liberals judge us to be spiritually unemployed, the basis on which they are going to lift the level of our existence? Many Democrats lament that Republicans have been successful in getting working-class Americans to vote “against their own interests,” by stressing social issues like abortion and gay marriage. Thomas Frank wrapped an entire bestseller, *What’s the Matter*

with Kansas?, around this idea. It’s a “false consciousness” diagnosis that betrays rather than describes the Democrats’ problem: the smug assumption that we know, far better than they do themselves, the “real interests” of people who live in dorky places and went to schools no one has heard of.

What Are Democrats Against?

AS A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY, THE BELIEF that “it is the job of government to widen the chance for development of individual personalities” is not merely lame and insulting, but dangerous. The endless widening and development of our personalities will require and legitimize the endless widening and development of our government. The threat goes beyond taxes, spending, borrowing, and regulating that increase without limit. It culminates in a therapeutic nanny state that corrupts both its wardens and its wards. Convinced that they are intervening, constantly and pervasively, to assist the growth of people who would otherwise stagnate, the enlighteners don’t need coercion to enfold the people in a soft totalitarianism. The objects of this therapy, meanwhile, may grow accustomed to it, and ultimately prefer being cared for to being free; or conclude that being free has no value apart from being cared for.

Lyndon Johnson gave one other memorable speech in 1964. At a campaign rally in Providence he climbed onto his car, grabbed

a bullhorn, and summed up his political philosophy: “I just want to tell you this—we’re in favor of a lot of things and we’re against mighty few.” The Democrats’ problem is not that they, like *Seinfeld*, are a show about nothing. It’s that they are a show about everything, or anything. (At one point, the Kerry-for-President website referred to 79 separate federal programs he wanted to create or expand.)

Ruy Teixeira says that after 2004, “The bigger question is: What do the Democrats stand for?” Here’s a better and bigger question still: What do the Democrats stand against? Tell us, if indeed it’s true, that Democrats don’t want to do for America what social democrats have done for France or Sweden. Tell us that the stacking of one government program on top of the other is going to stop, if indeed it will, well short of a public sector that absorbs half the nation’s income and extensively regulates what we do with the other half. Explain how the spirit of live-and-let-live applies, if indeed it does, to everyone equally—to people who take family, piety, and patriotism seriously, not merely to people whose lives and outlooks are predicated on regarding them ironically.

Until those questions are answered, until Americans have confidence about the limits liberalism will establish and observe, it’s hard to see when the Democratic narrative will again have a happy ending.

William Voegeli is a research fellow of the Claremont Institute.

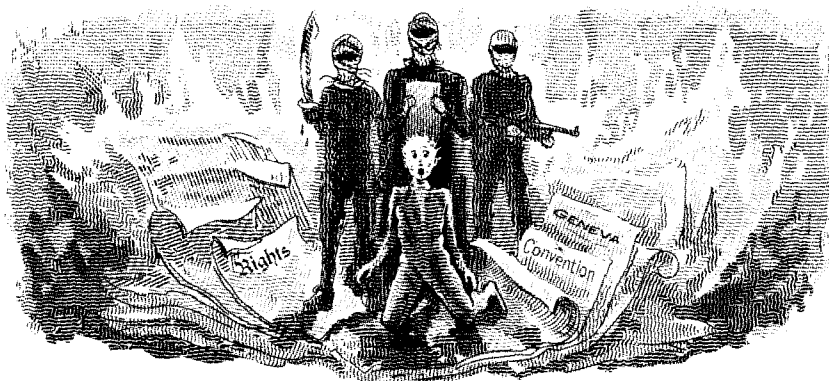




Book Review by Jeremy Rabkin

THE LESSER EVIL IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

The Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in an Age of Terror, by Michael Ignatieff.
Princeton University Press, 212 pages, \$22.95



MICHAEL IGNATIEFF IS DIRECTOR OF the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University and teaches courses on human rights at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. He is, in other words, a professional human rights advocate. Yet in 2002, Ignatieff broke with almost all human rights organizations when he publicly defended the Bush Administration's decision to go to war in Iraq, based on fears of what Saddam Hussein might do with weapons of mass destruction. A few years earlier, he published a bracing essay, "Human Rights as Idolatry," which challenged a number of thoughtless pieties holding sway in this field.

So Ignatieff deserves a hearing even from readers who might be averse to moral instruction from Amnesty International. One of the main arguments of this book is, in its way, another rebuff to the most common exhortations of contemporary human rights advocates. Sometimes, Ignatieff argues, even liberal democracies must perpetrate "evil"—he is insistent about that word—in order to combat or forestall worse evils.

Yet in spite of its good intentions, in spite of some eloquent and insightful passages, this remains a quite unsatisfying book. The heart of the difficulty is that Ignatieff wants to correct human rights moralism in order to leave room for the reasonable political calculations that a statesman must make when confronting terrorism. Yet he still wants to preserve the overall moral outlook of contemporary human rights advocacy, without acknowledging how fundamentally unpolitical or even anti-political it really is.

One of the better things in the book is the initial discussion in the chapter on "The Ethics of Emergency." Ignatieff rejects the "perfectionist" counsel that any suspension of normal legal

protections is a betrayal of constitutional ethics. He endorses Justice Robert Jackson's famous admonition that "the Constitution is not a suicide pact." At the same time, Ignatieff also rejects the argument that constitutional protections can therefore be ignored entirely during periods of war or emergency. The choice of which constitutional protections to hold and which to suspend cannot, he insists, simply be determined by "pragmatic considerations" of the moment. Even constitutional departures that enhance security may "diminish respect for laws and rights in the future," a "cost" that mere "utilitarian calculation" is apt to ignore. At the least, therefore, Ignatieff urges that legislatures and courts must take an active role in trying to assure that rights are not restricted more than is necessary or longer than is necessary.

Even here, however, Ignatieff skates over a number of serious complications. The same Justice Jackson who warned against overly restrictive constitutional interpretations also warned against forcing judges to review emergency actions in circumstances where they lacked the detailed information, the overall perspective, or the political support to do anything but acquiesce to executive judgments in the heat of the moment. Emergency actions that should rather be seen as questionable exceptions would then come to be seen as fully lawful precedents. That is a good reason to be cautious about relying on courts to constrain executive conduct in the course of a war. Still, there is good sense in Ignatieff's general point that if we are too quick to sanction broad suspensions of such guarantees as *habeas corpus*, "everyone then understands that an important guarantee of freedom is pliable and susceptible to political pressures."

The problem is that Ignatieff wants to move the argument from the actual Constitution to

what he takes to be the moral doctrine behind it—"a constitutional commitment to respect the particular and equal moral status of human beings." One might question whether this tells us very much about how any particular constitutional dispute—regarding such vexed issues as abortion, gay marriage, or "affirmative" racial preferences—should actually be decided. Ignatieff is so taken with this vision of equality, however, that he suggests at one point that no government may "assume that the lives of [its] own citizens matter more than the lives of people in other countries."

WHAT SEEMS TO FOLLOW IS THAT citizens have no more rights than non-citizens. And Ignatieff often seems to embrace this logic. Following the September 11 attacks, he protests, "[h]undreds of illegal aliens, mostly of Islamic or Arabic origin, have been targeted for detention and deportation." These actions, he says, were "as unjust as they were unnecessary." He does not explain why it is "unjust" to detain or deport someone who has already committed an offense by entering the country illegally. He does not explain why, given scarce resources for enforcement of immigration controls, it is "unjust" to focus special efforts on apprehending illegal aliens from those countries known to be terrorist breeding grounds.

Nor does Ignatieff offer any serious argument as to why this response to terror threats is "unnecessary." The fact that most people detained were entirely innocent does not mean that it was unnecessary to detain all suspects. Airport screening does not become unnecessary just because most such screenings don't detect dangerous weapons or spot actual terrorists.

Ignatieff's unexplained conclusion here seems to reflect his wider position. Whether



or not it is unconstitutional, a focus on aliens strikes him as, on its face, a challenge to the moral norm of equal respect for all persons. He can countenance exceptions and departures from this norm, when they are shown to be the "lesser evil." But he demands a strong presumption against such exceptions. Ignatieff insists that "to respect the moral status of human beings means treating individuals equally and treating all with at least a minimum of respect.... [H]uman rights are independent of conduct, circumstances, citizenship, desert or moral worth."

What this means, in turn, is that citizens should take their bearings, ultimately, by universal principles—such as "equal concern and respect" for every human being—rather than actual provisions of the actual constitution of the country. For the United States, which has lived for two centuries under the same Constitution, that means forfeiting the advantages that come from respect for national tradition, appeals to patriotism, the confidence that what has worked reasonably well for us before will likely prove reliable in the future—and subordinating all those solid benefits for the satisfaction of living up to Prof. Ignatieff's or Prof. Dworkin's or perhaps Prof. Kant's highly abstract philosophy of universal moral duties. There are many reasons to doubt that this would be a very good exchange, at least for Americans.

Indeed, there are many reasons to doubt that any country could survive for very long with this philosophy. Pressed to its logical conclusion, the idea that we should not prefer our own citizens to others would imply that foreigners—in unlimited numbers—have as much right to move into our country as do our own citizens who have taken a trip abroad. Pressed again to its logical conclusion, this principle of equality would seem to imply that a wartime commander should be as concerned about the lives of enemy troops as he is about his own. Should every war, then, out of respect for the equality of enemy troops, be fought with self-inhibiting standards to ensure an equality of losses?

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE IGNATIEFF ACTUALLY means to endorse such extreme or absurd policies. But it's telling that he does not stop to disclaim these apparent implications of his doctrine. An honest examination might raise too many awkward questions about Ignatieff's master principle regarding the "equal status of human beings." In this highly abstract form, the principle seems incompatible with the idea that a nation is entitled to defend itself—not merely to make occasional departures for the sake of some immediate threats but in a general way, as a premise of national existence. If a national government can't prefer its own citizens, systematically, why is it a national government?

Having abstracted from the special situation of citizens who live under common laws, Ignatieff proceeds to treat other conflicts as if they were or could be governed by the same sort of mutual consideration that is possible in an actual political community. He acknowledges that individual terrorists are often in the grip of nihilist rage or exaltation which cannot be appeased. But he insists that, while this fact may justify particular military responses as a "lesser evil," it does not justify indifference to the claims that inspire broader support for terrorist organizations. "To declare a war on terrorism risks, in itself, compromising the political values that should guide relations even with a liberal state's enemies." We must also see that military responses are not effective: "unless the basic motivation for terrorism—the perception of injustice—is addressed, no strategy against terror can succeed by purely military means."

Perhaps because he can find rhetoric about "resistance to colonial occupation" and "self-determination" in U.N. pronouncements and international conventions, Ignatieff emphasizes examples which turn on such grievances. In the 1960s, "[t]he French withdrawal from Algeria ended terrorism [in France]." In Sri Lanka, the way to end separatist violence by Tamil Tigers is through "political dialogue, sponsored by outside governments, that results in a compromise: meeting the legitimate claims of Tamils to federal self-rule without sacrificing the unity of the Sri Lankan state." So, too, "granting the self-determination claims of Palestinians" is "obviously the right political strategy to reduce terror attacks on Israel."

If it were true that injustice always spawns irresistible terrorist challenges, the history of the world would be one long record of terrorism—or of political settlements accepted by everyone as entirely just. But terrorist movements have often been defeated without accommodating any of their demands, as Turkey, for example, has repressed the Kurdish separatist movement over the past decade. Conversely, major concessions sometimes encourage insurgencies, as when the government of Israel returned most Palestinian territory to the administration of Yasser Arafat in the 1990s and wound up reaping one of the most extreme and relentless terror campaigns of modern history. It does not seem likely that "self-determination claims of Palestinians" can be safely granted until Israel demonstrates (as it is now doing) that its own military can subdue terrorists trying to impose their own interpretations of these claims.

There are, of course, well-known cases where terror campaigns have been ended by conceding the main goals of the terrorists. It was Winston Churchill who took the lead in negotiating a political solution to the terrorist insurgency in Ireland after the First World War, by granting most of what the Irish Republican Army had

sought. In the following decade, Churchill was more farsighted than most in realizing that threats from Germany could not be appeased in the same way, even if the German government advanced plausible "grievances" about the "self-determination" claims of ethnic Germans in neighboring countries. When or whether to engage in compromise with violent challengers is not simply a question of "justice"—which may be perceived quite differently on each side—but also of security. And how the security challenge is viewed depends a great deal on whether one thinks insurgents are "appeasable," and whether their continued resort to violence is a tolerable "nuisance" or an existential threat.

IGNATIEFF IS VAGUELY AWARE OF THIS, SO near the close of this short book he admonishes readers that in our efforts "toward relieving the global burden of injustice... we should be clear that we are doing so for reasons of justice, not in the hope of greater security. Having responded to injustice with justice, we have no right to expect peace and good feeling in return...." But if gestures toward "justice" do not enhance security, if they seem to signal weakness and encourage new terrorist efforts, then governments may prefer tolerating injustice to exacerbating insecurity. Ignatieff has little to say about when we should place greater emphasis on "security." He has little to say, for example, about the strategic significance of jihadist terror networks, which find supportive constituencies among Muslim communities in many Western countries and have reasonable hopes of seizing control of major oil-producing nations. Ignatieff's "political ethics" leave little room for strategic thinking.

Instead, Ignatieff continually harps on the importance of demonstrating respect for international human rights standards, even in the midst of war. So he chides the United States for failing to abide by the Geneva Convention in its handling of prisoners from Afghanistan. But the Geneva Convention on prisoners of war—like all of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, indeed, like all treaties on the laws of war, starting with the original Hague Convention in 1899—expressly stipulates that its terms apply only as between signatories or parties observing its terms. No one seriously argues that Taliban fighters in Afghanistan observed the laws of war in their own conduct. That is why the Pentagon has insisted that the prisoners at Guantanamo cannot be guaranteed all of the courtesies set out in the Geneva Convention (such as insuring that prisoners can meet freely together and have unrestricted claims on tobacco rations) when observing these rules might limit the effectiveness of U.S. interrogation efforts.

To see these standards as binding in all circumstances is to suppose that there is some special virtue in adhering to a treaty even when

other parties have reneged on it. No one seriously argues this is a sensible approach to arms control treaties. It is not easy to see how it can be a sensible response to treaties concerning other sorts of mutual restraint in the conduct of war.

At some point, it is fair to worry that we take on a moral burden in subjecting prisoners to outright torture. That is why the Pentagon did not defend abuses at Abu Ghraib prison but promised to ensure that they were not repeated. More generally, it is reasonable to worry about the moral burden of sacrificing countless enemy civilians to add a margin of safety to our own troops. That is why, in Iraq, the United States has sent highly disciplined ground troops into centers of insurgency, rather than destroying whole cities and everyone in them from the air, as we are capable of doing. The conduct of war, particularly against "unlawful combatants" (who melt into civilian populations rather than standing forth in distinctive, disciplined formations), poses many quandaries—in which moral considerations must contend with political and strategic assessments of the likely consequences of one or another tactic. It is not very likely that we will find optimal answers by leaving these questions to be settled by moralists in Geneva or in Cambridge, Massachusetts, who know little about actual military challenges on the ground and often profess themselves uninterested in such mundane matters.

IGNATIEFF MIGHT HAVE HELPED ILLUMINATE some of the difficulties by invoking the "just war theory" that has been nurtured for centuries by Catholic theologians and inspired thoughtful discussions, in recent decades, by scholars outside the Church. He says not a word about this tradition, however. Perhaps that is because it does not yield sufficiently precise answers to many of the questions Ignatieff wants to examine—regarding, for example, the rights of unlawful combatants. Or perhaps it is that the Catholic tradition is more

respectful of war as a form of "justice" and not merely a "lesser evil."

Instead, having identified the Constitution with an abstract principle of equal respect, he is eager to equate this abstraction, in its turn, with the jumble of prescriptions and pieties that happen to have found their way into international human rights conventions. In Ignatieff's telling, it is all part of the same "higher law" which is ours, because already universal. And from this standpoint he is eager to appropriate to his cause the older authorities in our constitutional tradition. So, in one earnest passage he affirms: "In the tradition of liberal constitutionalism that descends from Locke, law's ultimate protection lay in morality, in the ability of citizens to rise to the defense of law when morality revealed law's exercise to be unjust."

What Locke actually emphasizes is security, much more than morality. By the "law of nature," writes Locke, everyone is "bound . . . as much as he can, to preserve the rest of mankind" but only "when his own preservation comes not in competition" because each person is, in the first place, "bound to preserve himself." And Locke is not overly squeamish about what may be necessary for security: "by the fundamental law of Nature . . . one may destroy a man who makes war upon him, or has discovered an enmity to his being [that is, shown a disposition to predatory violence, even if not having actually attacked] for the same reason, that he may kill a wolf or a lion; because such men are not under the ties of the common law of Reason, have no other rule but that of force and violence and so may be treated as beasts of prey, those dangerous and noxious creatures that will be sure to destroy him, whenever he falls into their power."

Locke's teaching is hardly a comprehensive guide to strategy. And certainly it does not exhaust every moral question that one might raise about the claims of the "innocent" outside our boundaries. But there is a difference between worrying about our own constitutional traditions within our own country and worrying about universal humanity. Within our own

country, we have demonstrated success in getting most people, most of the time, to accept that what is constitutional is binding—and we would not want to put that at risk. Ignatieff pretends that we get almost the same benefit from international human rights standards. That is, to say the least, not very well demonstrated by the historical record.

THE ACTUAL LIBERAL TRADITION WAS not so optimistic. Outside our own legal system, Locke teaches, men are in a "state of nature" and in this condition, as Locke himself says, "there is no Authority to decide between contenders" so "every the least difference is apt to end" in a "State of War." The Declaration of Independence, which argues from very similar premises, culminates with an equally stark conclusion: Having asserted their national independence, Americans are entitled to "hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends."

We have had peace with most nations, most of the time. That gives us reason to hope that most disputes, most of the time, can be settled peacefully. Nothing gives us cause to believe Ignatieff's premise that we already live in a world of established rules. Admonitions to choose the "lesser evil" don't get us very far. It is especially difficult to rely on Ignatieff's ethical instruction when he systematically obscures the truth that any compromise of our constitutional independence, in the world we actually inhabit, can itself be a serious "evil." Ignatieff tries to persuade us that embracing a haphazard collection of abstract norms and treaty fragments, premised on the notion that we already live in a quite different world, is somehow an inherent good. It's not an ethical vision that holds much attraction, especially in an "age of terror."

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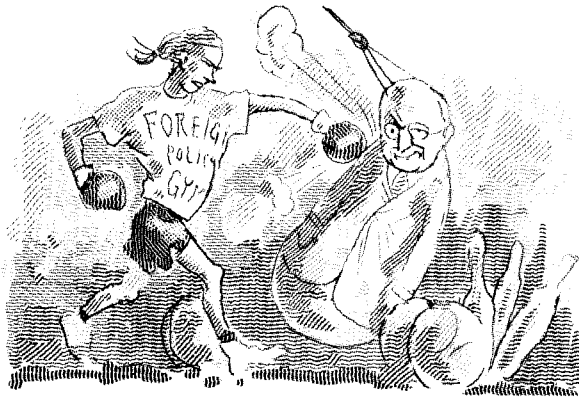
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ANTI-ANTI-NEOCONSERVATISM

America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order,
by Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke. Cambridge University Press, 382 pages, \$28

Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana,
by Gary Dorrien. Routledge, 336 pages, \$30



BASHING GEORGE W. BUSH HAS BEEN THE thinking person's sport for four years now. Foreign policy intellectuals play their own version of the game: bashing neoconservatives. This is Bush-bashing with a Ph.D. It has proven surprisingly popular, attracting onto the field not only liberals but also some traditional conservatives and many conspiracy theorists, for whom the neocons are the new Trilateral Commission. Sadly, a lot of this commentary is plagued by the same vices as Bush-bashing in general: chronic exaggeration, fast-and-loose connection-drawing, and over-the-top hyperbole. Reading it is enough to turn you into a fervent anti-anti-neoconservative.

This is a pity, because with Bush's re-election "the neoconservative question" is ripe for debate, and this high-stakes debate should be as well-informed as possible.

Instead, vitriol has already poisoned it. To blame are at least two propositions put forth by many critics of the neocons, including the authors of both these new books. The first is that there is such a thing as a tightly-knit and highly ideological community of neocons obsessed with unilateralism, military force, preventive war, and social engineering in the Middle East. It hardly helps that neocons have been defined not by themselves but by their critics. The second premise is that after 9/11, this group seized control of—Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke actually use the word "hijacked"—U.S. national security policy by virtue of their zeal and the on-hand nature of their pre-packaged agenda.

These premises lead many critics of neoconservatism, including these three authors, to make three crucial errors. First, viewing

neocons as an ideological community invites these critics to treat neocon thinking as a self-contained text, subject to exegesis, as if it were a religious doctrine or a text-driven ideology like Marxism. (It may be relevant that Gary Dorrien is a professor of religion, not international relations.) This has one big consequence: it invites many critics to summarize and present neocon thinking (sometimes fairly, as in Dorrien's case) without rendering the crucial service of evaluating its *validity* compared to alternative schools of foreign policy thinking such as traditional realism and liberal institutionalism.

Second, the "hijacking" imagery invites critics to oversell neocon influence. These and other commentaries suggest that when 9/11 drove up "demand," so to speak, for new policies, a single factor on the supply side—the ruthless zeal of neocon ideologues—caused Bush to adopt a new foreign policy. This overlooks the rest of the "supply" situation: the fact that other ideas on offer at the time were, to put it kindly, unpersuasive. Finally, the combination of these two premises leads nearly all critics to grossly mischaracterize post-9/11 U.S. foreign policy as systematically unilateralist and militaristic, when in fact it has been multifaceted and highly experimental.

HALPER AND CLARKE ARE SELF-declared Reagan-style conservatives, though of an exceedingly curious kind. They draw inspiration from Howard Dean, and Clarke, for his part, is a resident fellow at the Cato Institute, whose foreign policy is usually called isolationist. They trace the intellectual roots of today's neocons to the people

who first earned that label in the 1960s. This is bad intellectual history. The fact is, the first group called "neocon" wasn't especially homogeneous; the second group isn't much more so; and the two put together aren't at all. Even when today's neocons are literally the descendants of those so labeled in the 1960s, change is at least as evident as continuity in their assumptions about how the world works and what to do about it.

Carrying over the name from one group to the other is really a contrivance, based partly on sociology (both groups are intellectual, disproportionately Jewish, and not on the Left) and partly on occasional connections (some familial, some professional, as in: Richard Perle once worked for original neocon Scoop Jackson). But for serious analysis, the label comes close to having no utility. Yet Halper and Clarke, and to a lesser extent Dorrien, treat the later ones as organic extensions of the earlier ones. Halper and Clarke smooth out these exceedingly rough edges by talking more about family links, publishing venues, and topics of conversation than about the actual ideas that supposedly define this school of thought, or, as they call it, "political interest group." (Just out of curiosity: What is the "interest" in question?)

The original neocons were heavily concerned with the theoretical assumptions that lay behind government policies. They focused much more on domestic than foreign policy, which is emphasized by students of the original neocons, like Peter Steinfels, and is apparent in the pages of the paradigmatic neocon journal, *The Public Interest*. (The neocon circles at *Commentary* magazine are, of course, a slightly different matter.) They were famously impressed with



the power and durability of culture, and approached large-scale government interventions with skepticism. Jeane Kirkpatrick's essay "Dictatorships and Double Standards" specifically extended this skepticism to the contention that the U.S. could fine-tune regime outcomes in the developing world. Like any set of serious people searching for solutions to big problems, the neocons disagreed with each other almost as much as they agreed. They had in common a repulsion for the New Left. But to treat them as a tightly-knit "ism" is like treating "Protestants" that way just because they all left Catholicism for vaguely related reasons.

EVEN WORSE THAN HOMOGENIZING THE first neocons is jointly homogenizing both groups called neocon. This is often done without much intellectual connective tissue ever being identified. Today's neocons are labeled on the basis of foreign policy alone, and are not assumed necessarily to share a single domestic policy position. Moreover, the litmus test for identifying a neocon today is said to be the belief that the U.S. is capable of crafting democracies in the Middle East and must set about that task. This belief would strike—has already struck—several original neocons as utopian and imprudent. It is better, or maybe it's worse, that Dorrien recognizes such differences but then, just as if he hadn't, lumps all these people into the same intellectual history anyway.

It should come as no surprise that critics also over-identify doctrinal similarities among today's neocons. It's easy to do: Just quote someone labeled a neocon as saying something, then designate that something as part of neocon ideology, and finally suggest that all neocons, including those in office, devote themselves to advocating that something. The result is not just homogenization but hyperbole. Neocons are skeptical of treaty guarantees? Halper and Clarke conclude that they are "instinctively antagonistic toward international treaties and agreements." Neocons often find military strength handy? Halper and Clarke conclude that they see "the use of military force as the first, not the last option of foreign policy." Neocons want to hit the Taliban and Saddam with bombs, not subpoenas? This shows they reject "the classic antiterrorism tools of police and intelligence work." They define today's main threat as violent Islamism in search of WMDs? They must share an "open hostility" to Islam.

And when the labeling reach exceeds the definitional grasp, things get messy. Dorrien says *National Review* is neocon, but Halper and Clarke don't put it on their list. Halper and Clarke say the Heritage Foundation is neocon, but Dorrien doesn't even list it in his index, even though both Heritage and NR backed to the hilt the signature neocon project of Iraq.

Both books say Donald Rumsfeld is not a neocon. That doesn't seem controversial, since almost everyone says that. Except that he seems to me to meet the criteria Halper and Clarke adopt (on page 11) to define neocons. But he's out anyway. Both books say Daniel Pipes is a neocon. But Pipes is a well-known skeptic of Middle East democratization. Maybe they put him in because he likes to quote Bernard Lewis, and apparently neocons like to do that.

This feels less like rigorous analysis and more like teenagers haphazardly joy-riding through a think-tank with a paintball gun. Over fifteen years ago, Seymour Martin Lipset urged that the term neoconservative, while not useless historically, be dropped as "irrelevant to further developments within American politics." We should have been so lucky.

All this matters, instead of just being silly and sloppy, because the labeling game has a very specific effect on the debate over neoconservatism. When the two generations of neocons are shoved together, and their ideas are homogenized and then traced to alleged theoretical tap-roots like Straussianism, the overwhelming impression left with readers is that today's neoconservatives should be understood above all as an ideological community. And this misimpression has big implications. For one thing, as a debating tactic, it un-levels the playing-field from the start, by portraying neocons as ideologues who collide uncomfortably with reality. This leaves other foreign policy approaches free to claim that they, in contrast, are realistic or pragmatic, as virtually all of neoconservatism's critics do. Halper and Clarke identify "the fatal neoconservative flaw: conceptual overreach and the absence of pragmatism."

More important, treating neocons as an ideological community invites critics to treat their ideas as the product of an ideological heritage instead of as the product of hard-won, real-world experience. If they saw them as the latter, critics would set out instead to evaluate the validity of neocon ideas *compared* to other foreign policy proposals on offer. This should come naturally to Halper and Clarke. After all, they say neocons should be analyzed as a "political interest group," and political science research on that subject usually highlights competition *between* interest groups. But Halper and Clarke focus only on neocons in isolation. This leaves them saying, with many others, that neocons took over after 9/11 because they "were ready with a detailed, plausible blueprint." This suggests there wasn't competition between points of view, and that neocons took over foreign policy without a fight because they were zealous and well-positioned.

This asks us to ignore the traditional realists and liberal institutionalists who were also full of advice and on the scene. As Norman Podhoretz says, it also asks us to believe "that

strong-minded people like Bush, Rumsfeld, Cheney, and Rice could be fooled by a bunch of cunning subordinates." Consequently, it precludes consideration of the crucial possibility that maybe those people adopted key neocon proposals because rival approaches did not provide credible alternatives. After the Cold War, and especially after 9/11, U.S. leaders faced two overarching national security questions: What should U.S. grand strategy be in a "unipolar" world? And how should America deal with violent Islamism and its global ambitions? "Neoconservatism" can be understood as an alternative, on these two matters, to traditional realism and liberal institutionalism. And a careful reading of the facts, as opposed to a reading of some texts, suggests that the common stereotype is a caricature of the neocons, not a useful guide to them.

AMERICA TODAY STANDS ASTRIDE THE world as no other country in history. This is not because it is inherently more powerful than everyone else. Other states combined amply possess enough population, money, and technology to check America. America is daunting because, first, it has no close single rival, and second, it mobilizes its capabilities in defense spending at a higher rate than most. Neither condition seems likely to fade anytime soon. Here, neocons have a lot in common with realists but differ sharply with liberal institutionalists. Liberal institutionalists say unipolarity cannot last, so America should soften its (inevitable) relative decline by intertwining all countries in international institutions favorable to us, as they insist it did after 1945.

There are two problems with this. Ohio State University's Randall Schweller points out the first: "Had American policymakers... been persuaded by the chorus of scholars in the 1970s to late 1980s proclaiming that U.S. power was in terminal decline"—persuaded, that is, to accommodate rather than confront the U.S.S.R.—"the Cold War might have continued for decades longer." Instead, Reagan avoided decline "through bold policy choices." The record simply does not support the belief that America is inevitably declining now any more than then. Thus, neocons and realists are basically indistinguishable in proposing to maintain U.S. military power at least at present levels.

Second, realists and neocons are also agreed that international institutions and agreements are not reliable guarantors of security. This, too, is a response to real-world events. Yet many critics of neoconservatism, including Dorrien and Halper and Clarke, often fail even to mention events—regularly invoked by neocons (and realists) to explain this posture—such as Hitler's treaty violations, collective security

failures of the League of Nations and the U.N., and Soviet arms control violations. Amazingly, these books don't even mention North Korea's violation of its 1994 agreement with the Clinton Administration. Neither book lets on that the U.N. failed Rwandans. Dorrien doesn't mention that the Kosovo operation would have been nixed had it required U.N. approval; Halper and Clarke only do so in passing. Don't expect Darfur to get much coverage in any second editions. Leave out little details like these, and it's easy to portray neocons as doctrinaire, and to avoid engaging substantively with their reasoning (not that some neocons don't return that particular favor).

Traditional realists urge caution in a unipolar world for the very different reason that restraint is the bold choice that can help keep the world unipolar, by avoiding frightening other countries into "balancing" against a threatening America. But this, too, is questionable. There is reason to believe that most nations do not balance against the U.S. as they do against others, because we are oceans away and have a history of benign intentions. The test of which side is correct is unfolding before our eyes, and so far the neocons have the field. Despite America's power and recent behavior, there is simply no evidence that other countries are even beginning to balance against us.

Moreover, the advice to tread exceedingly cautiously—proffered by some realists and especially by isolationists—is based on the flawed premise that the most likely source of long-term threats is an in-your-face American presence around the world. Sometimes the opposite seems the case. Warding off major threats means encouraging other major powers to remain peaceful rather than becoming dangerously aggressive. That requires an ambitious system of carrots and sticks, which, in turn, requires a ramped-up U.S. military; U.S. involvement in many regional conflicts; and a worldwide network of bases, landing rights, and allies. The most obvious example of this phenomenon is the fact that the extensive and expensive U.S. presence in Western Europe and northeast Asia after 1945 had pro-American, not anti-American, effects. Today, China is surrounded by weak states and might be tempted to pursue a war-making path to power and glory. If we want to make sure that its incentives are to be peaceful instead, we have to hem China in with U.S. allies and credible, if implicit, U.S. threats. That means keeping a toe in Japanese and Korean matters, in shipping-land controversies, Chinese border disputes, and more. But if all that keeps China on a path of peace, economic growth, and gradual liberalization, it will have paid off handsomely. Here, too, neocons and many realists are broadly agreed.

But aren't neocons overreliant on the use of force? A focus on a stylized neocon "ideol-

ogy" misses some basic distinctions. The first is between challenges to U.S. primacy and other sorts of challenges. Like realists, most writers and officials called neocon don't advocate a massive U.S. presence in Latin America, South Asia, or sub-Saharan Africa, because those regions host no possible strategic competitors. A second distinction is between the possession of force and its actual use. Dorrien and Halper and Clarke suggest that neocons conflate the two, saying for example that neocons prefer war as a first resort and eschew other tools of foreign policy. But their evidence for this is sparse. Neocons like Paul Wolfowitz say America should vigorously contain China, not invade it. And even the hawkish are uncertain whether it makes sense to attack nuclear facilities in North Korea and Iran.

In sum, on the question of U.S. grand strategy in a unipolar world, a strictly liberal institutionalist agenda has not been persuasive even to Democratic leaders like Bill Clinton and John Kerry. And realists and neocons are divided by less than meets the eye.

ON THE SUBJECT OF VIOLENT ISLAMISM, neocons are made more distinguishable by their emphasis on political reform in the Middle East. But on this score, their rivals have less to propose by way of alternatives.

September 11 presented U.S. leaders with the second question: how to deal with the rise of violent Islamism and its global atrocities? It is not surprising that Bush did not adopt the liberal institutionalist agenda in the days that followed. Halper and Clarke speak for many when they recommend a grab-bag of law enforcement, renewed alliances, non-proliferation agencies, cooperation with non-governmental organizations, and restoration of America's pre-9/11 reputation. This amounts to the broad contours of foreign policy under the elder Bush and Bill Clinton. And that is the America against which al-Qaeda initiated the 9/11 plot to begin with, and the America that was vulnerable to that plot. This supposedly progressive vision gets us straight back to September 10. A more muscular approach was inevitable. Any U.S. government would have, for example, toppled the Taliban. But what then?

Many realists might have preferred to deter remaining rogue states and terrorists. But if deterrence works on these players, why didn't the fear of reprisal stop the Taliban from permitting the 9/11 plot to proceed from their territory? Why did they then reject Bush's 11th hour ultimatum? After that, why did Saddam not save his throne? Why does Iran not abandon its nuclear research even when our distaste is made clear? It's possible that these radical regimes became convinced that America would not strike them, even after Afghanistan, and

that an even more unignorable lesson needed to be taught. This is why many realists joined neocons in arguing that Iraq was a logical occasion for teaching that lesson. But both schools are now unclear on whether these lessons are enough, or more are needed. Instead of revealing bloodthirstiness, this reveals an experimental approach. We simply don't know yet how the remaining rogue states will act. The jury is still out, and policy is properly tentative. In that spirit of flexibility of means, neocons don't seem afraid to acknowledge the desirability and even periodic indispensability of allies, which is why John Bolton launched the multilateralist Proliferation Security Initiative. (How do critics reconcile the PSI to the neocons' alleged dogmatic unilateralism? Dorrien does it by not mentioning it, Halper and Clarke by not explaining what it is.)

What about dealing with the terrorists themselves? Realists and liberal institutionalists have no policies custom-tooled to the novel fact that on 9/11 America was attacked by an organization that emerged from a subculture of sympathy, financing, and recruiting spread across more than a dozen countries. Small cells from that subculture, with minimal infrastructural support, have gone on to inflict further massacres in Bali, Madrid, and elsewhere. What exactly is the West supposed to do? Neocons distinctively argue that Mideast tyranny is the taproot of radicalism and that democratization will cut it off. This strikes liberal institutionalists as needlessly provocative and realists as recklessly meddling. But the notion that U.S. national security policy should be to change domestic arrangements in other countries isn't novel. Note that America focused on obliterating the Nazi and Soviet *regimes*, not their countries.

But on this issue more than any other, neocons are on weak ground. It is clear neither why authoritarianism might cause extremism in the Middle East but not elsewhere, nor how to create stable democracies. The administration's apparent assumption—that democracy is the default outcome when people are relieved of a vicious dictatorship—is not well-founded.

Then again, neocons do not seem single-minded on the subject, inasmuch as the administration simultaneously cooperates with many authoritarian regimes.

The neocon approach to unipolarity is bold but well within the American mainstream. Their views about the actual use of force are utterly conventional. Their take on deterrence is cloudy, but for now so is the evidence. Finally, their taste for political reform in the Middle East may not be persuasive to many (myself included), but the administration has stopped at one experiment, and its critics have precious few alternative strategies to offer. This approach blends ambition with

far more pragmatism than its critics give it credit for.

HALPER AND CLARKE CALL THEIR chapter on Iraq a “case study” of neocon assumptions, methods, and results. This is deeply disingenuous. That term implies that they selected Iraq from a wider sample of possible cases. But what other “case” fits their caricature? They have lost all perspective. It is *reductio ad iraqum*. And it has swept the nation.

A spectacular attack on America led U.S. military power to be applied to only two regimes in only one region of the world. Since the campaign against al-Qaeda is being pursued globally and not just in those two countries, most of it must be being waged bilaterally or

multilaterally. It is, but you would never know it from these studies. Halper and Clarke say that neocons reject the “the full range of initiatives available . . . political, financial, legal, and diplomatic.” But the administration approaches Iran and North Korea multilaterally. Syria faces economic sanctions, not invasion. Broadcasting in Arabic has been stepped up. And the Bush Administration is working daily with dozens of governments, gathering intelligence, tracing money, and tracking suspects.

And these governments are cooperating not because they are “bribed and coerced” but because they have a stake in defeating violent Islamism, too. This very much includes Russia, China, and also the European Union, which now officially identifies its number one security threat as terrorists armed with WMDs—practically a

page torn from Bush’s 2002 National Security Strategy. Yet Halper and Clarke decry “America alone” and say it is in a “virtual one-on-one confrontation with Islamic radicalism.” While they’re at it—why stop there?—they blame neocons for the Patriot Act and say America stands today at the brink of an “Orwellian reality.” Their account initially seems breathless; it turns out they’re hyperventilating.

Americans need to decide what to make of neoconservative ideas. It might be possible to make a case effectively demolishing them. So far, that case hasn’t been made.

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Essay by Charles R. Kesler

DEMOCRACY AND THE BUSH DOCTRINE

GEORGE W. BUSH’S FIRST PRESIDENCY, devoted to compassionate conservatism and to establishing his own bona fides, lasted less than eight months. On September 11, 2001, he was reborn as a War President. In the upheaval that followed, compassionate conservatism took a back seat to a new, more urgent formulation of the Bush Administration’s purpose.

The Bush Doctrine called for offensive operations, including preemptive war, against terrorists and their abettors—more specifically, against the regimes that had sponsored, encouraged, or merely tolerated any “terrorist group of global reach.” Afghanistan, the headquarters of al-Qaeda and its patron the Taliban, was the new doctrine’s first beneficiary, although the president soon declared Iraq, Iran, and North Korea (to be precise, “states like these, and their terrorist allies”) an “axis of evil” meriting future attention. In his stirring words, the United States would “not permit the world’s most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world’s most dangerous weapons.”

The administration’s preference for offensive operations reflected a long-standing conservative interest in taking the ideological and military fight to our foes. After all, the Reagan Doctrine had not only indicted Soviet Communism as an evil empire but had endeavored to subvert its hold on the satellite countries and, eventually, on its own people. The Bush Administration’s focus on the states backing the terrorists implied that “regime change” would be necessary,

once again, in order to secure America against its enemies. The policy did not contemplate merely the offending regimes’ destruction, however. As in the 1980s, regime *change* implied their replacement by something better, and the Bush Doctrine soon expanded to accommodate the goal of planting freedom and democracy in their stead.

Captive Nations

ON THIS POINT, THE BUSH DOCTRINE parted company with the Reagan Doctrine. Although the Reagan Administration’s CIA and other agencies had worked to build civil society and to support democratic opposition groups in Eastern Europe, Central America, and other strategic regions, these efforts were directed mostly to helping “captive nations” escape their captivity. That is, they presupposed a latent opposition against foreign, usually Soviet, oppression, or as in the satellite and would-be satellite countries, against domestic oppressors supported by the Soviets. The Russian people themselves counted as a kind of captive nation enslaved to Marxism’s foreign ideology, and Reagan did not flinch from calling for their liberation, too. He always rejected a philosophical détente between democracy and totalitarianism in favor of conducting a vigorous moral and intellectual offensive against Communist principles.

But as a practical matter, the Reagan Doctrine aimed primarily at supporting labor unions,

churches, and freedom fighters at the Soviet empire’s periphery—e.g., Poland, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Grenada—rather than at its core. Even in these cases, the Administration regarded its chief duty to be helping to liberate the captive nations, that is, expelling the Soviets and defeating their proxies, rather than presiding over a proper democratization of the liberated peoples. Not unreasonably, the Reaganites thought that to those freed from totalitarian oppression, America’s example would be shining enough, especially when joined to their visceral, continuing hatred for the Soviet alternative.

In countries where bad or tyrannical regimes were homegrown or unconnected with America’s great totalitarian enemy, the administration’s efforts in support of democratization were quieter and more limited still. These involved diplomatic pressure, election-monitoring, and occasional gestures of overt support, such as the administration’s endorsement of “people power” in the Philippines. Most importantly, Reagan wanted to avoid the Carter Administration’s hubris in condemning the imperfect regimes of America’s friends, while neglecting the incomparably worse sins of America’s foes.

The distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, classically restated by Jeane Kirkpatrick in her article that caught Reagan’s eye, “Dictatorships and Double Standards,” provided intellectual support for his administration’s policies. Authoritarian regimes, like Iran’s Shah or Nicaragua’s Somoza, though

unsavory, were less oppressive than totalitarian ones, Kirkpatrick argued. What's more, countries with homegrown monarchs, dictators, or generalissimos were far more likely to moderate and perhaps even democratize themselves than were societies crushed by totalitarian governments. And it was this potential of non-democratic but also non-totalitarian states to change their regimes for the better, in their own good time, that helped to justify America's benign neglect of or, at most, episodic concern with their domestic politics. Once freed from the totalitarian threat, countries like Nicaragua or Afghanistan could more or less be trusted to their own devices.

The wave of democratization that occurred in the 1980s, especially in Asia and South America, seemed to confirm the wisdom of the administration's approach. Even when America was called to play a role, as it was in the Philippines, our intervention was short and sweet, confined mainly to persuading Ferdinand Marcos to leave office.

By comparison, the Bush Doctrine puts the democratization of once totalitarian, quondam authoritarian, and persistently tribal societies at the center of its objectives. The case of Afghanistan shows, to be sure, that the Reagan Doctrine had its drawbacks. Left to itself, Afghanistan after the Soviets' withdrawal did not resume its former ways, at least not for long, and certainly did not evolve into a democracy. Instead, it succumbed to the Taliban's peculiar Islamic totalitarianism. Nevertheless, the Bush Administration's policy is not merely to expunge the totalitarians there and in Iraq, but to ensure that they never return by reconstructing their societies along democratic lines. Authoritarianism (at least in the Middle East) is no longer acceptable. The U.S. now proposes to liberate these nations from the captivity of their own unhappy traditions.

So far as it goes, that policy, or some version of it, might be justified by the circumstances and stakes of U.S. involvement, even as the American refoundings of Germany and Japan after the Second World War were justified on prudential grounds. Occasionally, the Bush Administration makes this kind of argument. (The analogies are not exact, of course—about which more anon.) But usually this claim is mixed up with a very different one that is more characteristic of the Bush Doctrine as such: America's supposed duty, as the result of our respect for human rights, to help the Iraqis and others realize their democratic entitlement and destiny.

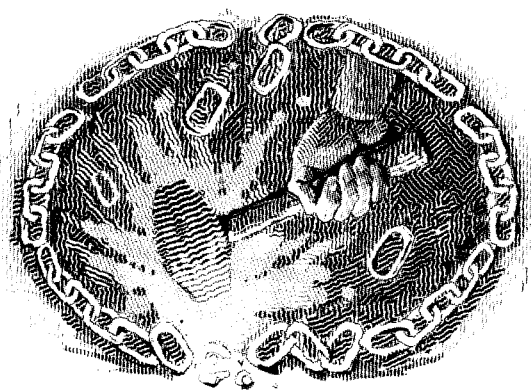
Rights and Republicanism

POLITICAL SCIENTISTS JAMES W. CEASER and Daniel DiSalvo draw attention to this dimension of the Bush Doctrine when they observe, in a recent issue of *The Public*

Interest, that "President Bush has identified the Republican party with a distinct foreign policy, which he has justified by recourse to certain fixed and universal principles—namely that, in his words, 'liberty is the design of nature' and that 'freedom is the right and the capacity of all mankind.'"

Bush's appeal, in their words, to "the universality of democracy and human rights" is a watershed moment in the history of American politics, with enormous significance for the Republican Party and the conservative movement. "Not since Lincoln has the putative head of the Republican party so actively sought to ground the party in a politics of natural right."

Bush's revival of natural or human rights as the foundation of political morality is welcome, and should be taken seriously. Like Lincoln, Bush is, in his own way, looking to the American Founding for guidance in charting his course through the dire circumstances that confront him. But there is, in his use of these noble ideas, a certain ambiguity or confusion between the natural right to be free and the capacity to be free. The two are not quite the same.



The founders affirmed that every human being has, by nature, a right to be free. Unless men were endowed by nature with a certain minimum of faculties, inclinations, and powers, that right would be nugatory. Taken together, those endowments—which include reason, an access to morality (variously traced to reason, conscience, or the moral sense), a spirited love of freedom for its own sake, passions (especially the powerful desire for self-preservation), and physical strength—constitute the capacity or natural potential for human freedom. But this potential needs to be made actual, needs to be awakened by practice and habit.

James Madison, for example, writes in *The Federalist* of "that honorable determination which animates every votary of freedom to rest all our political experiments on the capacity of mankind for self-government." In the largest sense, those experiments aim to prove whether the latent capacity of mankind for self-government

can, at last, after centuries of slumber, be activated, realized, and confirmed by the conduct of the American people—in particular, by their ratification of the newly proposed Constitution. Alexander Hamilton underlines the point in that work's famous opening paragraph: "It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country, by their conduct and example, to decide the important question, whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force."

The human right to be free, in other words, does not guarantee the human capacity to be free. That capacity must be elicited and demonstrated, and its noblest and most persuasive proof is by the establishment of "good government," along with the habits necessary to perpetuate it; the habits of heart and mind that, among other things, allow a people's "choice" to be guided by "reflection."

Notice, too, that the founders are not content with (merely) democratic regimes, i.e., with governments that hold elections and empower majorities to rule. The test of mankind's political capacity is that its self-government should culminate in good government, in regimes that not only have elections but actually achieve the common good and secure the rights of individuals, whether or not they belong to the ruling majority. This blend of constitutionalism and republicanism is extremely difficult to attain. Well acquainted with the history of failed republican regimes, the founders by and large thought it the *most difficult* of all forms of government to establish and preserve. Hence good, republican government is an achievement, not an entitlement.

The Limits of Regime Change

THUS EVEN WITH THE IMPROVEMENTS in political science celebrated by Madison, Hamilton, and the other founders, most of them never expected republican government to spread easily and universally across the globe. Though fervent believers in universal moral principles, they knew that these had to be approximated differently in different political situations. In this sense, they were students of Montesquieu and Aristotle, who taught that governments have to be suited to a people's character and conditions.

None of this implies, of course, that dramatic political change is not possible. America's founders could not have been founders if they did not think regime change possible and, in their own case, desirable. Founding is possible because culture is not destiny; politics can reshape a nation's culture. But they knew also that no founding is completely *de novo*. Every attempt



at regime change begins from the existing habits and beliefs of the people for whom you are trying to found a new way of life. Accordingly, the founders would have been cautious, to say the least, about America's ability to transform Iraqis into good democrats.

In the last century, we saw in the cases of Germany and Japan that it is possible to remake even Nazi and imperial Japanese institutions into democratic regimes. But these are really exceptions that prove the rule that it is very difficult to pull off this kind of transformation. Germany and Japan were exceptional, first, because the U.S. and its allies had beaten them into complete submission. Then we occupied them for decades—not merely for months or years, but for the better part of a half-century. And both were civilizations that had the advantage of having enjoyed beforehand a high standard of living, widespread literacy, and considerable political openness. Besides, America was reorganizing them at the beginning of the Cold War, when circumstances compelled them, as it were, to choose between the West, with its democratic institutions, and the East, with its bleak tyranny.

To his credit, President Bush recognizes the difficulty of the task in Iraq. He acknowledged to the National Endowment for Democracy that "the progress of liberty is a powerful trend," but that "liberty, if not defended, can be lost. The success of freedom," he said, "is not determined by some dialectic of history." In his elegant speech at Whitehall Palace, he affirmed that "freedom, by definition, must be chosen and defended by those who choose it." And he warned that "democratic development" will not come swiftly, or smoothly, to the Middle East, any more than it did to America and Europe.

Nonetheless, he finds strong support for the "global expansion of democracy" in human nature itself. "In our conflict with terror and tyranny," he said at Whitehall, "we have an unmatched advantage, a power that cannot be resisted, and that is the appeal of freedom to all mankind." In a speech in Cincinnati, he declared, "People everywhere prefer freedom to slavery; prosperity to squalor; self-government to the rule of terror and torture." Aboard the U.S.S. *Abraham Lincoln*, after announcing that "major combat operations in Iraq have ended," he said, "Men and women in every culture need liberty like they need food and water and air."

Democratic Feelings

HERE HE STUMBLES. IT IS ONE THING TO affirm, as the American Founders did, that there is in the human soul a love of liberty. It is another thing entirely to assert that this love is the main or, more precisely, the naturally predominant inclination in human nature, that it is "a power that cannot be resisted."

In fact, it is often resisted and quite frequently bested, commonly for the sake of the "food and water and air" that human nature craves, too. The president downplays the contests within human nature: conflicts between reason and passion, and within reason and passion, that the human soul's very freedom makes inescapable. True enough, "people everywhere prefer freedom to slavery," that is, to their *own* slavery, but many people everywhere and at all times have been quite happy to enjoy their freedom and all the benefits of someone else's slavery.

In his 2002 State of the Union Address, one of his best speeches, he amplified his point. "All fathers and mothers, in all societies, want their children to be educated and live free from poverty and violence. No people on earth yearn to be oppressed, or aspire to servitude, or eagerly await the midnight knock of the secret police." There is truth in the president's words, but not the whole truth. No one may want to be oppressed, but from this it does not follow that no one yearns to oppress. The love that parents feel for their children does not necessarily transfer to benevolence, much less equal solicitude, for the children of others. This is why "do unto others" is not a moral rule automatically or easily observed. This is why, when Abraham Lincoln distilled his moral teaching to its essence, he did not confine himself to the wrongness of slavery simply. "As I would not be a slave," he wrote, "so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is not democracy."

In other words, that "people everywhere" or "all fathers and mothers" have the same *feelings* for themselves and their own kind does not (at least not yet) make them believers in human equality, human rights, or democracy. President Bush, in effect, plants his account of democracy in common or shared human passions, particularly the tender passions of family love, not in reason's recognition of a rule for the passions. He does not insist, as Lincoln and the founders did, that democracy depends on the mutual recognition of rights and duties, grounded in an objective, natural order that is independent of human will. Bush makes it easy to be a democrat, and thus makes it easier for the whole world to become democratic.

History and Culture

YET DEMOCRACY BASED ON FEELINGS OR compassion has obvious limits. What takes the place of the rigorous moral teaching that once lifted compassion to the level of justice? What summons forth the embattled statesmanship and republican striving that sustain democracy, especially in crises? Despite his comments that democratic progress is not inevitable and that "the success of freedom is not determined by some dialectic of history,"

Bush finds himself appealing again and again to a kind of providential or historical support for democracy. In the same speech in which he uttered the words just quoted, he concluded by saying: "We believe that liberty is the design of nature; we believe that liberty is the direction of history."

At Goree Island, Senegal, the slave ships' point of departure from Africa, Bush declared:

We know that these challenges can be overcome, because history moves in the direction of justice. The evils of slavery were accepted and unchanged for centuries. Yet, eventually, the human heart would not abide them. There is a voice of conscience and hope in every man and woman that will not be silenced—what Martin Luther King called a certain kind of fire that no water could put out.... This untamed fire of justice continues to burn in the affairs of man, and it lights the way before us.

In this eloquent address, the president praises the role that John Quincy Adams and Lincoln, among others, played in the fight against slavery, but he salutes their "moral vision" as though that alone had been sufficient to doom the peculiar institution. In his words, "Their moral vision caused Americans to examine our hearts, to correct our Constitution, and to teach our children the dignity and equality of every person of every race." What happened to the Civil War, not to mention Jim Crow? Bush leaves the impression that "history moves in the direction of justice," and that once Americans were awakened to the Truth, they went with the flow. Yet the anti-slavery cause, at least in Lincoln's mind, did not depend in the slightest on history's support for the triumph of free labor and free men. Rather, it was a very close issue, requiring for its resolution all of Lincoln's genius and the Union's resources, not forgetting a considerable measure of good luck. And the triumph, so dearly won, soon gave way to tragedy and renewed tyranny in the South.

Bush's position recalls the important recent dispute between Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington. Huntington insists that, after the Cold War, international politics will be marked by the inevitable clash of civilizations, e.g., between the Islamic and non-Islamic nations. Fukuyama argues that history is overcoming all such cultural clashes and culminating in liberal democracy, which is destined to spread all over the world. In this dispute, Bush seems to be firmly on Fukuyama's side. At West Point, the president explained, "The 20th century ended with a single surviving model of human progress, based on non-negotiable demands of human dignity, the rule of law, limits on the power of the state, respect for women and pri-



vate property and free speech and equal justice and religious tolerance.... When it comes to the common rights and needs of men and women," he said, "there is no clash of civilizations."

If not dialectical, Bush's account of history certainly seems Darwinian; history has winnowed itself down to a "single surviving model of human progress." He dismisses doubts that the Middle East will grow increasingly democratic as narrow-minded, if not downright prejudiced. From his 2004 State of the Union Address: "[I]t is mistaken, and condescending, to assume that whole cultures and great religions are incompatible with liberty and self-government. I believe that God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom." Yes, but the question is whether some cultures and religions are less compatible with freedom and democracy than others, and if so, how in his second term the president ought to adjust our foreign policy. Granted, too, that God has implanted in men a love of freedom, but cultures, rulers, and religions each diffract that love, accentuating, obscuring, or perverting it. Bush calls those who raise such contentions "skeptics of democracy," when in fact they are skeptical mostly of his easy-going account of democracy.

James Q. Wilson, with his usual insight and learning, takes an empirical look in the December *Commentary* at the relation between Islam and freedom. He declines to inspect Islam and democracy, on the grounds that there are too few examples from which to generalize and that, in the long run, personal liberty is more important. From liberty, liberal democracy may spring; democracy without liberty is despotic (Fareed Zakaria's recent book, *Illiberal Democracy*, reinforces this point). Wilson proffers Turkey, Indonesia, and Morocco as reasonably liberal Muslim states; of these only one, Morocco, is both Muslim and Arab. What these cases have in common, he suggests, is a "powerful and decisive leader" who can "detach religion from politics"; an army that "has stood decisively for secular rule and opposed efforts to create an Islamist state" (a condition that Morocco does not quite meet); the absence of "a significant ethnic minority" demanding independence; and the lack of major conflicts between Sunni and Shiite Muslims.

Iraq shares none of these advantages. Straining to find some cause for optimism, Wilson notes that in one opinion poll more than 75% of Iraqis express support for liberties like free speech and freedom of religion. In the same poll, about 40% endorse a European-style parliamentary democracy.

Rethinking the Doctrine

IN THIS VEIN, IT IS HEARTENING TO SEE elections in Afghanistan, with thousands upon thousands lining up to vote. It is

encouraging, too, that elections are about to be held for the new Iraqi national assembly. As the president says, "it is the practice of democracy that makes a nation ready for democracy, and every nation can start on this path." But not every nation will finish it, because democracy is not just a matter of elections. Democracy requires that majorities restrain themselves and practice sometimes disagreeable tasks out of respect for law and for their fellow citizens. These tasks, in turn, require a willingness to trust one's fellow citizens that comes hard to tribal societies, whose members are not used to trusting anyone who is not at least a cousin.

Of course, it is a wonderful thing to hear President Bush reassert the natural-rights basis of just government and, incidentally, of the Republican Party. As against today's shallow culture of liberal relativism, his willingness to point out the plain difference between good and evil is bracing, and recalls Ronald Reagan's denunciation of the Evil Empire. The worry is that in tracing the individual right to be free to ordinary human compassion or fellow-feeling, and then confounding that right with an entitlement to live in a fully democratic regime, Bush promises or demands too much and risks a terrible deflation of the democratic idealism he has encouraged.

As he begins his second term, the president and his advisors must take a hard, second look at the Bush Doctrine. In many respects, it is the export version of compassionate conservatism. Even as the latter presumes that behind the economic problem of poverty is a moral problem, which faith-based initiatives may help to cure one soul at a time, so the Bush Doctrine discovers behind the dysfunctional economies and societies of the Middle East a moral problem, which "the transformational power of liberty" may cure, one democrat and one democracy at a time. "The power of liberty to transform lives and nations," he admonishes, should not be underestimated. But it may be that the administration underestimates the difficulty of converting whole societies in the Middle East into functioning democracies. By raising expectations—by making democracy appear as an easier conversion and way of life than it really is—Bush risks not only the erosion of liberal and pro-democratic support within Iraq, but also at home a loss of public confidence in the whole war effort.

One wonders, for example, whether his version of compassionate democracy is sufficiently alert to the problem of security. In most American wars, the reconstruction did not begin until the fighting had ended, until the enemy was subjugated and peaceful order imposed on the country. Vietnam was an exception, but not a very helpful one. Bush criticizes previous administrations for making short-sighted bargains with Mideast kings and dicta-

tors, trading security for liberty in the region. Without liberty, he argues, there is no long-term security. Although he has a point, liberty itself presupposes a certain minimum security for life, liberty, and property that is woefully absent in much of Iraq. Earlier American statesmen, including the founders, would have been keenly aware of this requirement because their argument for republican government put great weight on the passion, and the right, of self-preservation. A government that could not protect the life and liberty of its citizens (better than they could left to themselves) was no government at all.

But in its first term the Bush Administration underestimated the problem of security because it overestimated the sentimental or compassionate grounds of democracy. Expecting the Iraqis quickly and happily to get in touch with their inner democrat, the administration was surprised that so many of them took a cautious, more self-interested view, preferring to reserve their allegiance for whichever side would more reliably protect them from getting killed. In general, the Bush team needs to recall that weak, contemptible, authoritarian regimes are not the only breeding grounds of trouble in the Middle East or elsewhere. Weak, contemptible democracies can be the source of great evil, too, as Weimar Germany attests.

Finally, the Bush Doctrine's all-absorbing focus on bringing democracy to Iraq tends to crowd out concern for the kind of constructive, wide-ranging statesmanship that is needed there and in other Islamic nations. Unfortunately, the administration has never thought very seriously about constitutionalism, either at home or abroad, except for the narrow, though important, issue of elections. As the example of Turkey suggests, it may take many years, if ever, before Iraq is capable of a fully-functioning liberal democracy. In the meantime, the Iraqis need to adopt what arrangements they can to create strong executive powers; security forces able to protect their countrymen's life, liberty, and property; a free, prosperous economy; local experience in managing local affairs; and impartial courts. Better regimes than the Taliban or Saddam Hussein are surely attainable, and are being attained. But these new governments are haunted by dire threats, including the danger of civil war and national disintegration.

Aboard the U.S.S. *Abraham Lincoln*, President Bush promised, "we will stand with the new leaders of Iraq as they establish a government of, by, and for the Iraqi people." But let us not expect that they will reform themselves—much less that we shall transform them—all at once up to the standards of the Gettysburg Address.

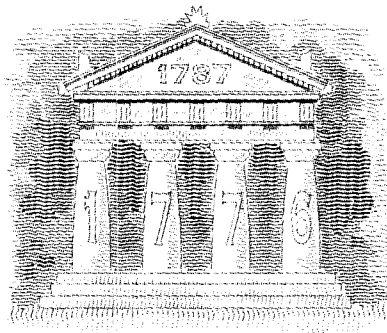
Charles R. Kesler is editor of the *Claremont Review of Books*.



Book Review by Herman Belz

A MORE PERFECT UNION

Heir to the Fathers: John Quincy Adams and the Spirit of Constitutional Government,
by Gary V. Wood. Lexington Books, 249 pages, \$70



AS A NARRATIVE OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, the much maligned though strangely resilient thesis of American exceptionalism can be summarized: "In the beginning were the founders, and then there was Lincoln." Gary V. Wood, in this penetrating and clear-sighted study of John Quincy Adams, renovates and augments one of the most significant "exceptionalist" interpretations of American political history. His book is an important contribution to the recovery of the foundations of American constitutionalism faithfully and vigorously pursued for many years by Harry V. Jaffa and his students.

Adams is best known as an expansionist-minded Secretary of State, unpopular conservative president in the era of rising Jacksonian democracy, and civil-libertarian opponent of the slave power in Congress from 1831 to 1846. Focusing his study on two of Adams's most important writings, Wood offers a revisionist interpretation of him as the leading spokesman for the founders in the early Republic.

Wood's thesis is that Adams was heir to the fathers most significantly in his conviction that the principles of the Declaration were identical to the principles of the Constitution. According to Wood, the founders never felt it necessary "to articulate clearly and systematically" the relationship between these two constitutive documents of American nationality. This was "an unfortunate oversight" that had "dire consequences" when controversy over slavery shattered the moral consensus of the founding. It was left to Adams, who "wrote about the relationship between the Declaration and the Constitution more clearly and articulately than anybody before him," to rectify this oversight. Adams's political thought and statesmanship disclosed the real nature of the nexus between the acts of foundation on which the American Republic was based.

Adams's *The Jubilee of the Constitution* (1839), commemorating Washington's inauguration as president, and his argument in the Supreme

Court in the *Amistad* case of 1841, form the basis for Wood's account of Adams's constitutionalism. In a country as extensive as the United States, consensus on Declaration principles could exist only at a high level of generality. At the level of practical application, the rights of life, liberty, equality, and consent varied according to time, place, and circumstance. Even more perplexing was the question of how the right to revolution in the Declaration of Independence was to be recognized in a permanent constitutional Union. After 1820, debate on these issues was channeled into sectional conflict over slavery, the constitutional status of which had been, from the government's beginning, a political sore point for Northerners and a source of moral resentment and vulnerability for Southerners. In the crisis of American nationality provoked by the slavery controversy, Wood argues, Adams's holistic construction of the Declaration and the Constitution disposed him toward a right understanding of the nature of the Union.

Required to clarify things left implicit by the founders, Adams's *Jubilee* address interpreted the Declaration and the Constitution as interrelated parts of the compact theory of government. He affirmed the Declaration's principle that the people, in virtue of their equality grounded in human nature, are the only legitimate source of power. Yet the sovereignty of the people had limits and was not self-justifying. It was necessary to acknowledge the people's "moral responsibility to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe" in order that the power of government, derived from the people's constituent sovereignty, might be made consistent with the principles of justice. On this condition, Adams wrote, "the institution, dissolution, and reinstitution of government, belong exclusively to THE PEOPLE."

Wood states that Adams, acclaimed as an opponent of the gag rule and other proslavery measures in Congress, participated in the *Amistad* case in the belief that the country must

confront the slavery question, deciding whether it would be a republic based on force or on justice. His argument on behalf of African captives claiming freedom under international law appealed to the Declaration's principle of a natural right to individual liberty. Wood summarizes: "Adams pointed the Court to the authority of God, which is at the same time the authority of right reason. Once again he brought reason and revelation together as partners in the battle against arbitrary power."

WITH AMBITION AND ERUDITION worthy of his mentor, Wood provides a lucid and often dazzling analysis of Adams's thought within the framework of classical philosophy, Jewish and Christian theology, and modern philosophy. Illuminating as is the sweep of Wood's philosophic history, however, its discursive character tends at times to attenuate and obscure the intellectual cogency of Adams's thought in its specific historical context. Wood fails, for example, to consider key passages in *Jubilee* discussing secession and the right to revolution—the most controversial element in Adams's Declarationist constitutional construction.

Jubilee articulates Adams's theory of the nature of the Union, affirming the constituent sovereignty of the people against the pretensions of state sovereignty. He argued that in the Declaration of Independence the "whole people," exercising their "constituent revolutionary power," declared the existence of the United States of America as a "compound nation." The Articles of Confederation, in contrast, asserted "the sovereignty of organized power" in "the separate or disunited States." The Confederation, said Adams, was "an unconscious usurpation upon the rights of the people of the United States"; between it and the Declaration there was "no congeniality of principle." The Constitution rectified this error, restoring the principles of the Declaration as the ground of national Union.

The Federal Convention made a Constitution for the people based on the self-evident truths of the Declaration. By ratifying it in state conventions, the people completed the revolutionary project of dissolving their ties of allegiance from one country, demolishing their old government, and instituting another government for themselves as an independent nation. Washington's inauguration carried the Constitution into execution, "to abide the test of time." Whether it would meet the test depended on the "good providence of Heaven," the character of those who would administer it, and the principles of the Constitution itself.

IN 1839 THE STATUS OF SLAVERY LOOMED AS the most significant question of constitutional principle facing the nation. According to the American way of constitutional politics, this matter was debated not directly on the Declaration's moral grounds, but in terms of the nature of the Union and the relative powers of the general and state governments. Central to this debate was the form and practical meaning of the right to revolution as a constitutional right.

Notwithstanding the commemorative purpose of *Jubilee*, Adams said recent events made it necessary once again to consider, as in the revolutionary era, questions "of the deepest and most vital interest to the continued existence of the Union itself." The key questions were "whether any one state of the Union had the right to secede from the confederacy at her pleasure," and "the right of the people of any one state, to nullify within her borders any legislative act of the general government."

Secession was possible under the confederation. Adams pointed out that the question came up and was "practically solved" in the framing and ratification of the Constitution. The people of Rhode Island, for example, refusing to take part in the Convention, "virtually seceded from the Union." When eleven states formed and ratified the Constitution, North Carolina, although it participated in the Convention, joined with Rhode Island in staying out of the reorganized Union. Adams wrote: "Their right to secede was not contested. No unfriendly step to injure was taken;...the door was left open for them to return whenever the proud and wayward spirit of state sovereignty should give way to the attractions of clearer sighted self-interest and kindred sympathies."

With the ratification of the Constitution, secession assumed a different aspect. Adams explained: "The questions of secession, or of resistance under state authority, against the execution of the laws of the Union within any state, could never again be presented under circumstances so favorable to the pretensions of the separate state, as they were at the organization of the Constitution of the United States." Although a national government had the power

to decide when violation of a contract absolved it from reciprocal obligations, Adams argued that "this last of earthly powers is not necessary to the freedom or independence of states, connected together by the immediate action of the people, of whom they consist."

Nevertheless, in the conduct of American federalism, uncertainty about the boundary line between the constitutional authority of the general and the state governments led to collisions threatening the dissolution of the Union. In different sections of the Union, Adams noted, the right of a state, or of several states in combination, to secede from the Union, and the right of a single state, without seceding, to nullify an act of Congress within the borders of that state, had been "directly asserted, fervently controverted, and attempted to be carried into execution." Fortunately, these examples of state resistance proved abortive, demonstrating in Adams's view the superiority of the Constitution over the Confederation, as a system of government "to control the temporary passions of the people." Adams observed: "In the calm hours of self-possession, the right of a State to nullify an act of Congress, is too absurd for argument and too odious for discussion. The right of a state to secede from the Union, is equally disowned by the principles of the Declaration of Independence." Adams's fundamental argument was that no right of state secession or nullification existed *under the Constitution* because the right to revolution was a natural right of the people. "To the people alone is there reserved, as well the dissolving, as the constituent power, and that power can be exercised by them only under the tie of conscience, binding them to the retributive justice of Heaven." In Adams's theory of the Union, the "whole people" of America, in the Declaration of Independence, declared the existence of a "compound nation." In their dual or compound character, the people were capable of acting as a "whole people" for national purposes in the government of the Union, and as a state people for particular purposes in their state government. "With these qualifications," Adams summarized, "we may admit the same [natural] right as vested in the people of every state in the Union, with reference to the General Government, which was exercised by the people of the United Colonies, with reference to the Supreme head of the British empire, of which they formed a part—and under these limitations, have the people of each state in the Union a right to secede from the confederated Union itself."

THROUGHOUT HIS PUBLIC CAREER Adams struggled with the seeming contradiction involved in maintaining a constitutional order that owed its existence to the right of revolution. At a high level of generality, and more explicitly than in any previous

writing, Adams in *Jubilee* advanced a theory of the right to revolution for Declarationist ends, couched in the language of secession or disunion. The timing and specific form that a division of the Union might take was a contingent matter, to be decided on prudential grounds. A few years later, Adams provoked the fury of Southerners by defending the constitutional right of Massachusetts abolitionists, in order to avert unjust domination by the slave power, to petition Congress for dissolution of the Union, without himself recommending exercise of the right to revolution on the merits.

Adams concluded his discussion of the threat of disunion with an appeal to the founders. Referring to the qualified popular right of secession as he defined it, he wrote: "Thus stands the RIGHT. But the indissoluble link of union between the people of the several states of this confederated nation, is after all, not in the *right*, but in the *heart*." Should the day come when the affections of the people were alienated from each other, it would be better "for the people of the disunited states to part in friendship... than to be held together by constraint." Then would be the time to revert to the precedent of the fathers, "to form again a more perfect union, by dissolving that which could no longer bind, and to leave the separated parts to be reunited by the law of political gravitation to the center."

Was it possible, decades removed from the founding, peaceably to exercise the right to revolution to reunite states in a more perfect union? Adams himself may have doubted it. From the days of the Essex Junto and the Hartford Convention, he pondered how the right to revolution could be exercised in a constitutional Union based on legal obligation. Speculate though one might about the "postulates" under which a division of the Union might be justified, as Adams did, he was convinced that in practice any such project necessarily implied "individual treason and collective rebellion."

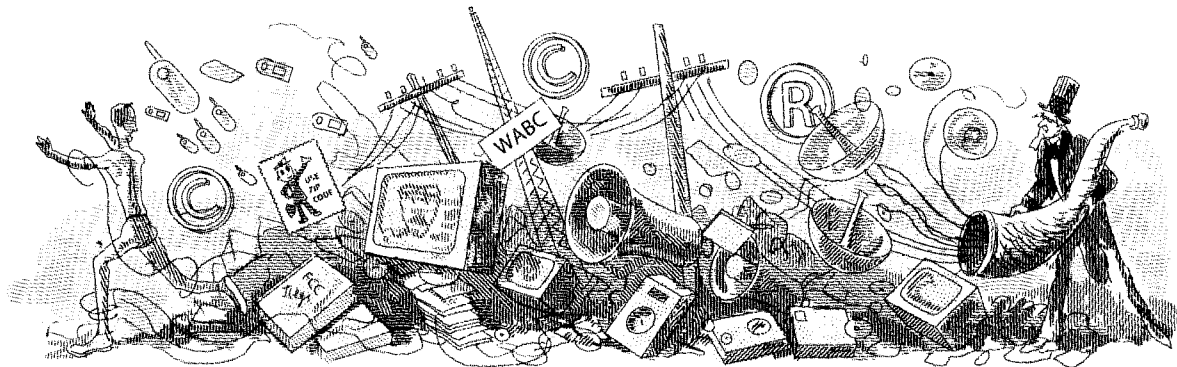
Civil war was always a danger under a federal system in which the Union's authority disposed it to treat state claims of a right of secession, or other intimations of disunion, as rebellion. When controversy over slavery introduced considerations of justice (based on the Declaration's principles) into the politics of constitutional construction, the long-feared "experiment of a civil war," in Adams's words, became all but inevitable. Lincoln's time to assume responsibility for preserving the Union, "conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," was fast approaching.

Herman Belz is professor of history at the University of Maryland and author of *Abraham Lincoln, Constitutionalism, and Equal Rights in the Civil War Era* (Fordham University Press).

Book Review by Benjamin Ginsberg

THE REGIME OF FREE SPEECH

The Creation of the Media: Political Origins of Modern Communications,
by Paul Starr. Basic Books, 496 pages, \$27.50



MOST CONTEMPORARY LIBERALS APPEAR to equate political freedom with a state that is weak abroad and strong at home; many conservatives seem to believe that freedom requires a state that is strong abroad but weak at home. But even as liberals need to acknowledge that the world can present dangers requiring the application of national power, conservatives should recognize that without an active and well-constituted government, freedom can become illusory. Indeed, we are often confronted with the apparent paradox that strong government can be a necessary condition for the existence of a free society.

Nowhere is this paradox more apparent than in the realm of freedom of expression and communication. It is tempting to equate such freedom with the absence of state interference. But the freedom of expression found in the United States and the other Western democracies is not the unbridled freedom of some state of nature. It is rather the structured freedom of a public forum, created and sustained by government. The maintenance of this forum, which theorists and jurists have sometimes called the "marketplace of ideas," has entailed more than two centuries of state effort in the areas of education, communication, and jurisprudence. The species of freedom that we enjoy is partly a product of the state's intervention, not merely a function of its benign absence.

In *The Creation of the Media: Political Origins of Modern Communications*, Paul Starr, a professor of sociology at Princeton University, examines the role of the U.S. government, along with the governments of Britain and France, in the construction of such instruments of free expression as the post office, the telegraph, the newspaper, and the radio. He also reviews the development

of a national jurisprudence that has encouraged and protected free expression from efforts by local and parochial forces to limit what could be said or printed in public.

From the beginning the United States government, in particular, played an enormous role in developing and fostering freedom of communication. In the early 1800s, Washington established an extensive system of post offices and post roads. Later, it encouraged the development of the telegraph, the telephone, and the radio. As for newspapers, without a substantial postal subsidy and considerable judicial protection from censorship and libel suits, the American press could never have thrived as it did. In these and many other respects, freedom of expression in the United States owes more to the state's intervention than one might think.

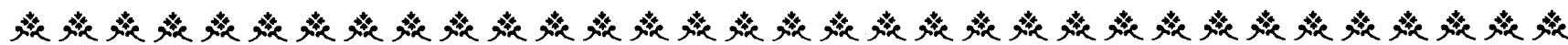
WOULD FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION exist without state intervention? Perhaps, but it would take a different form from the expression and communication that Westerners enjoy today. Without state intervention, local governments and cultural and ethnic groups surely would have maintained distinct languages and frames of reference. Multiculturalism would have been a given. In a similar vein, absent state intervention, regional and local interests almost certainly would have blocked the construction of nation-spanning communications networks. At the very least, different localities would have promulgated different rules.

How did Western countries establish national forums for free expression? Although Starr emphasizes the important differences between the United States and European states, from a broad perspective the similarities are more significant than the differences. First, in

the 19th century, most Western regimes made strenuous efforts to impose a single national language upon their citizens, who often spoke a bewildering array of dialects and tongues. In the U.S., the arrival of successive waves of immigrants during the century meant that, as today, millions of residents spoke no English. In response, national, state, and local governments worked to impose the English language on these newcomers through compulsory school instruction and adult education. Even without significant immigration, other nations had among their residents millions who did not speak the national language. In 19th-century France, for example, most citizens spoke little or no French, communicating, instead, through the Germanic dialects native to Normandy, Brittany, and the other provinces conquered by French kings over the centuries. Successive French governments, like their American counterpart, worked diligently to impose French on the population so that by the 20th century regional dialects remained the primary mode of expression only of elderly individuals in the most isolated areas.

Second, and closely related to the effort to achieve linguistic unity, was the matter of literacy. For ages, widespread illiteracy meant that communication depended upon word of mouth, a situation hardly conducive to the dissemination of ideas. In the last two centuries, however, all Western regimes worked to expand their citizens' ability to read and write. Like the imposition of a common language, the elimination of illiteracy has opened the way for nationwide expression and communication.

The third basic ingredient for the construction of the marketplace of ideas was the reconstitution of perception. Beginning in the 1800s, Western regimes sought, mainly through mass



education, to impose a common map or blueprint of the world upon their citizens. Mass education, of course, functioned as a key instrument of political indoctrination or socialization, helping to disseminate such concepts as love of country and respect for property. But even more important than their contribution to civic training, the schools played a central role in providing citizens with the same reference points and shared understandings of the world.

The central components of this shared perception included (1) a common sense of time and distance—all students were taught to “tell time” as measured by a universal and fixed clock and calendar, rather than the traditional relativistic measures of time linked to local conditions such as “harvest time”; (2) a common sense of geography and demography—all students were imbued (through the ubiquitous school map) with a shared sense of the physical and demographic makeup of the nation; (3) a common understanding of cause and effect—students were taught a scientific or rationalistic view of the world to take the place of various traditional notions, dismissed collectively as “magic” or “superstition”; and (4) a common view of history—citizens were supplied with a shared set of national historic reference points and experiences to supplant or at least coexist with family, local, and parochial histories.

Though creation of a common framework of perceptions by no means ensured agreement among the disparate elements of the populace, it was essential nevertheless, if merely for the achievement of meaningful disagreement. In the mid-19th century, a group of French peasants attacked the surveying equipment used for road and rail construction because they believed the machinery was a Parisian instrument designed to cause drought. These peasants’ descendants might still oppose a road or rail project, but the issue could be understood in similar terms by all parties.

A fourth facet of the construction of national idea markets was the development of major communications mechanisms. This process, ably described by Starr, involved a number of elements. During the early 19th century, governments established national postal services and built hundreds of thousands of miles of roads, opening lines of communication among regions and between cities and countryside. Road build-

ing was followed by governmental promotion of rail and telegraph services, further facilitating the exchange of ideas and information. Such “internal improvements” constituted the most important activity undertaken by America’s central government in the years surrounding the Civil War. During the 20th century, all Western regimes promoted the development of radio, telephone, television, and the new communications networks that link the world today. And though Al Gore’s claim to have invented the Internet was laughable, it is certainly true that national research dollars funded the beginnings of this new communications technology.

A final important component of state intervention to promote freedom of communication was, and is, legal protection for the free expression of ideas. In the U.S., over the past century, the federal courts have greatly limited the scope of official censorship, especially by state and local governments. Ignoring constitutional history, the federal courts held that First Amendment freedoms restrained the actions of state and local governments; then the courts subjected to increasingly strict scrutiny those local efforts to interfere with expression. At the same time, the courts made it virtually impossible to convict a newspaper or news magazine of libel and, of course, the notion of obscenity all but disappeared from the law.

Taken together, state efforts to bring about literacy, linguistic unity, and a common framework of perceptions as well as to develop communications mechanisms and legal protections for speakers, writers, and journalists are the necessary preconditions for modern-day freedom of speech and expression. Without two centuries of active intervention by the state, freedom of expression in the West would hardly be recognizable. Many might speak—but who would be able to understand or listen?

STARR ENDS HIS ACCOUNT IN 1941, AS though no events of significance have taken place during the past six decades. During this period, however, a number of developments have begun to threaten what Starr calls the “public sphere.” One of these is the growing demand for multilingualism and multiculturalism. Carried to a logical conclusion, these forces would undermine two centuries of effort to create a common universe of discourse

and understanding. How can Americans deal with one another compassionately and fairly if they literally do not speak the same language? Another contemporary development that does not figure into Starr’s history is the growing concentration of media ownership. Is this a phenomenon likely to be curbed—or exacerbated—by state action?

Still another emergent threat he omits is political correctness. The bans on so-called hate speech (now common in Europe, too) and the crude speech codes on many American campuses may reflect good intentions, but they are restrictions on freedom of expression that ultimately erode the public sphere.

In the 1980s, when I taught at Cornell University, even then a hotbed of political recititude, I gave a lecture criticizing the lobbying activities of the American Association of Retired Persons in which I referred to AARP members as “greedy and rapacious senior citizens” who would sacrifice the welfare of their children for a few dollars more in social security benefits (full disclosure requires that, in a moment of madness, I referred to the aforementioned senior citizens as “old farts”). A number of students complained to the administration that their professor had engaged in “racist” rhetoric contrary to some speech code, the existence of which I was unaware. I explained to the administrative functionary who contacted me that senior citizens did not exactly constitute a race. Perhaps, I offered helpfully, I might be considered guilty of “ageism.” He seemed unpersuaded but I heard nothing further. Perhaps the matter is still under investigation.

Though this particular episode was amusing, the general phenomenon is not. Most professors are extremely cautious about expressing opinions inconsistent with campus orthodoxy. This is hardly a state of affairs calculated to enlarge or enlighten the public sphere.

Thus Starr brings *The Creation of the Media* to an abrupt end before many of the most interesting parts of the story begin. So the book is by no means the last word on the political origins of modern communications. But it is a good start.

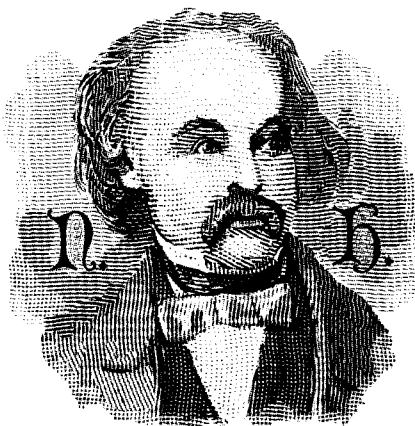
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Book Review by Jay Martin

THE LAST JEFFERSONIAN

Hawthorne: A Life, by Brenda Wineapple.
Alfred A. Knopf, 509 pages, \$30 (cloth), \$16.95 (paper)



IN THE PREFACE TO HIS LAST COMPLETED novel, *The Marble Faun* (1860), Nathaniel Hawthorne spoke of America as that place “where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a common-place prosperity, in broad and simple daylight.” Nearly twenty years later, in 1879, Henry James picked up this thread and, from his own transatlantic point of view, amplified it in his *Hawthorne*. Hawthorne was obliged to write romances, he said, because the “elements of high civilization” were absent in America during Hawthorne’s time: “no state . . . [no] sovereign, no court, no personal loyalty, no aristocracy, no church, no clergy, no army, no diplomatic service,” James began, and then continued on through a long list of lacunae. When so much of “customs, manners, usages, habits, [and] forms,” were missing, James inquired, what was left for the novelist to draw upon?

James was largely right about Hawthorne’s art. Hawthorne made the necessity of romance into a triumph of art, and his varied investigations of American legends and his rigorous examination of the inmost heart of man made up for the lack of a developed society. What James termed large absences and “destitutions” became, for Hawthorne, the advantages and additions of imagination and minute perceptivity. In her *Hawthorne: A Life*, Brenda Wineapple skillfully delineates Hawthorne’s gain, from his earliest sketches and tales, to his novels, essays, and his works for children.

But another side of Hawthorne is sketched in her book, though not emphasized. James said about Hawthorne and his American contemporaries that though they lacked so much of social life one thing still remained for Americans;

and this was, he ventured obscurely to say, the American’s “secret joke.” It turns out that what Americans decidedly had, and had in abundance to counterbalance all that was missing, was *politics*! Tocqueville, of course, commented perceptively on the superabundance of political activity in America during the decades of Hawthorne’s career. The life that Wineapple sets forth shows Hawthorne enmeshed in politics every bit as much as he was engaged in literature and the literary life.

It would be, to use Hawthorne’s own phrase, a “twice-told tale” to rehearse Hawthorne’s development and accomplishments as a man of letters. Most American high-schoolers or college readers of anthologies know something of his literary career. But Wineapple’s book reminds us that Hawthorne lived in a tumultuous time politically; that he knew many major political figures, profiting from his association with them; that he wrote frequently for political journals; that he sought political offices; that he gained from politics the income that allowed him to write fiction; and finally, that through a political appointment he got hold of the subject about which he wrote his best book, *The Scarlet Letter*. Earlier biographers, of course, have written about Hawthorne’s politics and political associations. But for those readers who have never examined a Hawthorne biography in full, Wineapple offers a healthy and happy corrective to the predominant one-sided image of Hawthorne as a delicate, withdrawn recluse who penned remarkably subtle fictions of the dark dramas of tortured inner lives.

SOME OF HAWTHORNE’S EARLIEST PUBLISHED essays were written in 1836 for the *American Magazine of Useful and*

Entertaining Knowledge, which he came to Boston to edit; he himself wrote sketches of George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and John C. Calhoun. About his personal interest in American politics there was nothing surprising. At Bowdoin College, Hawthorne had been friends with Franklin Pierce, Horatio Bridge, and Jonathan Cilley. Like them, Hawthorne became a committed neo-Jeffersonian Jacksonian Democrat, and remained one all his life. Advocating the political principles of limited government, states’ rights, and individual liberty committed him to a conservative republican view that federal powers must be kept at a minimum. Cilley was soon elected to Congress, where his promise of a brilliant political career was ended fatally by a duel. Hawthorne wrote his memorial. Pierce, like Cilley, rose rapidly into influential positions in the Democratic Party; Bridge, too, had political connections in Maine and Washington, D.C. Hawthorne soon became friends with John O’Sullivan who served in the New York legislature, was a follower of Martin Van Buren, and, in 1837, became editor of the *Democratic Review*, in which, between 1837 and 1845, Hawthorne published twenty stories. The masthead of O’Sullivan’s party organization rang with Jeffersonian and Jacksonian fervor: “The Best Government is that which Governs Least.”

Through these friends Hawthorne had been working as hard to get some political post or preferment as he had labored on his stories. The “spoils system” was in glorious ascendancy, and Hawthorne sought to be its beneficiary. Pierce and Bridge tried to get him taken on as historian for a Congressionally-supported South Seas Expedition eventually led by Charles Wilkes. Just before his death, Cilley was laboring to ob-



tain a place for Hawthorne at the Salem Post Office, or perhaps an office in the Capitol. Later, other friends of Hawthorne's urged Orestes Brownson to represent Hawthorne's merits to George Bancroft, collector of the Port of Boston and political boss of the Democratic Party. In this case, Bancroft loomed larger as a politician than as the great historian. Bancroft did, in fact, offer Hawthorne an inspectorship in the Boston Custom House and later a post there as measurer of coal and salt, which the impoverished author and party loyalist gladly accepted. In 1840, when Martin Van Buren failed at reelection, Hawthorne resigned his post. "He'd not serve under Whigs . . .," Wineapple remarks. Four years later, with the election of Polk, Hawthorne declared himself available again for an office.

In 1846 it came. With Franklin Pierce, Maine's Senator John Fairfield, and the chairman of the Essex County Democratic Committee all promoting the cause of Hawthorne to President Polk, he was appointed surveyor of the Salem Custom House at a salary of \$1,200 a year, entailing little work. "I have grown considerable of a politician," Hawthorne wrote to Horatio Bridge. He returned some favors with articles in the *Democratic Review* and by inviting such speakers as Daniel Webster to lecture at the Salem Lyceum, where Hawthorne became secretary. It was from the Custom House in Salem that Hawthorne got the idea for *The Scarlet Letter*. That book made him internationally famous. True, when the wheel turned and the Whigs came back into power in 1848, Hawthorne was summarily dismissed—"an act of wanton and unmitigated oppression by the Whigs," William Cullen Bryant wrote in his Democratic paper, the *New York Evening Post*. For his part, Hawthorne retaliated in the spirit of Machiavellian politics, attempting to get the Senate to reject his proposed successor; and as to his chief local political opponent, he vowed to "do my best to kill and scalp him in the public prints." In the preface to *The Scarlet Letter*, he

did just that—roasting the Whig incumbents at the Custom House. Hawthorne had gotten an income as well as a subject in Salem: literature, politics, and economics had gone hand in hand. And once *The Scarlet Letter* was published in 1850 Hawthorne's fame made him eligible for even more lucrative posts.

Now that he was famous, he was a sterling candidate for political preferment. When Franklin Pierce was nominated for the presidency, Hawthorne volunteered to write his "campaign biography." He did so with dispatch, got the best known publishing house in America to issue it prominently, and advertised his other books in it. He flatly told his publisher: "We are politicians now; and you must not expect to conduct yourself like a gentlemanly publisher." The \$300 he earned was far less important than the fact that this favor for his friend, when Pierce became president, dropped a very lucrative political spoil in Hawthorne's lap—the American consulship of Liverpool. This was then a great plum because Liverpool was the main port through which England transported goods to America, and the Consul there was authorized to charge two dollars for his signature each time a vessel departed. Hawthorne calculated that he could, as he said, "bag" enough to save about \$10,000 a year. And he was happy to give up his solitary life at a novelist's desk for the political preferment and the daily chink of coin in the Liverpool Consul's office. At the peak of his fame he gave up literature and would publish nothing during the next seven years.

Hawthorne liked the job at the consulate; he worked steadily and well at it. He liked the social life that it allowed him in England. If he were turned out of office, he lamented, he would "have to begin scribbling romances again...." With the election of James Buchanan he was turned out. And then, as easily as he had become a political appointee, he returned to literature, moving to Italy, where he gathered material for his last romance, *The Marble Faun*, concerning American expatriates in Italy. And then he

went back home to Concord. To the end his political allegiances remained with Pierce's Kansas policy and the Democratic Party; he despised the Whigs and the Free Soilers who abandoned the Democratic Party, and he feared the policies of the new Republican Party and its 1856 candidate John C. Frémont. He lived just long enough to see Lincoln elected and the country plunged into war. He was a prominent member of a Massachusetts delegation led by Representative Charles Russell Train that traveled to Washington to meet with the new president. "On the whole," Hawthorne wrote, "I like this sallow, queer sagacious visage, with the homely human sympathies that warmed it; and, for my small share in the matter, would as life have Uncle Abe for a ruler as any man whom it would have been practicable to put in his place."

HAWTHORNE DIED AT THE AGE OF 59, before the end of the Civil War, a cataclysm to which he had never become reconciled. His doubts about the war required that his essay, "Chiefly about War Matters by a Peaceable Man," had to be censored to permit its publication. *Our Old Home*, his last book, was castigated on political, not literary grounds, for Hawthorne's dedication to Pierce, who was still held in contempt in New England for his support of the compromise in Kansas. But Hawthorne remained faithful to his earliest political principles. He was perhaps the last Jeffersonian in American politics and the last true romancer in American letters. Brenda Wineapple's biography allows us to see how much Hawthorne unified and intertwined political activity with a literary life.

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COUNTING EVERY VOTE

Fraud of the Century: Rutherford B. Hayes, Samuel Tilden, and the Stolen Election of 1876,
by Roy Morris, Jr. Simon & Schuster, 320 pages, \$27 (cloth), \$14 (paper)

Centennial Crisis: The Disputed Election of 1876,
by William H. Rehnquist. Alfred A. Knopf, 288 pages, \$26 (cloth), \$14 (paper)

ONE OF THE LESS-NOTICED LEGACIES OF Progressivism is the abandonment of political history, or at least its demotion from pride of place. Although the founding and the Civil War retain their allure to the general public and even to professors, the histories of other eras have become specialized tastes.

To Progressive historians, the great changes that remade society resulted not from the choices of mere politicians but from social and economic movements, in which many share but none control. Indeed, the usual stuff of political history—ambition, interests, schemes, and deals—was precisely the muck that Progressives thought could be raked and discarded. The rise of democracy or (in today's preferred formula) the triumph over various forms of discrimination can, after all, make for a grand narrative, beside which tales of partisan intrigue and even individual politicians' virtue may seem idiosyncratic or ultimately futile. Ambition counteracting ambition, interests entering coalitions with other interests—these are the usual fare of American politics, but to Progressives these stories had all the suspense and consequence of a dime-store novel, and, except to political junkies, none of the romance.

For lovers of American politics who are skeptical of the dominant progressivisms, however, there is no better way to reengage the political history of the United States than to look at the disputed presidential election of 1876. And now, in the wake of the disputed election of 2000, come two books that do precisely that—fittingly, one from the Democratic perspective and one from the Republican. For the Democrats, we have an experienced writer on the era, Roy Morris, Jr., with *Fraud of the Century: Rutherford B. Hayes, Samuel Tilden, and the Stolen Election of 1876*; and for the Republicans, no less a figure than the Chief Justice of the United States, William H. Rehnquist, with *Centennial Crisis: The Disputed Election of 1876*.

THERE IS BY NOW LITTLE DISAGREEMENT on the basic facts. Democrats had every reason to expect success in 1876. The expiring Grant Administration had been mired in scandal; the economy had been sour since the Panic of 1873; Democrats had won back the House of Representatives in 1874,

for the first time since the Republican sweep of 1860; and they had won control of all but three of the former Confederate states and had reason to expect to "redeem" those state governments in '76. In Samuel Tilden, Governor of New York and a Wall Street lawyer, they had both a proven reformer who had helped break the hold of Boss Tweed on Tammany Hall and a master political tactician who as a young man had learned his trade from Martin Van Buren. An anti-slavery Democrat before the Civil War and a hard-money (indeed, quite wealthy) man after, Tilden could win votes in the South and West without bearing any taint from their heresies.

The Republicans had somehow come together at their convention to nominate everyone's second choice, Rutherford Hayes, Governor of Ohio and a Civil War veteran; but neither the party nor the candidate was confident that Hayes's personal rectitude would adequately overcome the legacy of "Grantism." And there was no denying the exhaustion of Reconstruction in the South or the momentum for change in the nation as a whole. Neither Tilden nor Hayes was surprised by the news reports on election evening that gave Tilden New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Indiana, most of the South, and a 3% lead in the popular vote. Both apparently went to bed thinking the presidency would belong to the Democrats.

What happened next is also generally agreed upon. Late on election night, Daniel Sickles—who had been in turn an antebellum Democratic congressman, the first beneficiary of a "temporary insanity" defense for killing his wife's lover, a Union General who lost a leg at Gettysburg, and a United States minister to Spain—stopped by Republican headquarters in New York City, and, finding the national chairman already in bed, began perusing returns. Realizing that, if the three Reconstruction states still in Republican hands came in for Hayes, he would win the Electoral College 185 to 184, Sickles cabled Republicans in Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina (and Oregon) to "hold your state." Meanwhile, John C. Reid, the managing editor of the *New York Times*, whose experience in Andersonville prison during the Civil War confirmed him as a staunch Republican, came to the same conclusion about the possibility, however slim, of a Hayes victory

in the Electoral College. While many papers of both partisan stripes called the election for Tilden the next morning, the *Times* demurred, declaring it "doubtful."

"Visiting statesmen" from both parties descended on the three Southern states in question during the weeks that followed, to witness the tabulation of the vote by the state canvassing boards, which for all three states were in Republican hands, and perhaps to find a way to influence the outcome. In South Carolina, where extra federal troops had been stationed after extensive pre-election violence, the presidential votes seemed narrowly but clearly enough in Republican hands, though the Democrat Wade Hampton seemed to have won the race for governor. In Florida the preliminary vote was very close. In Louisiana Tilden led by a margin of about 7,000. The canvassing boards, however, had legal authority to disregard the votes of precincts and counties (or in Louisiana, parishes) where fraud or irregularity was discovered; and in Florida and Louisiana, allegations were made and testified to that there had been violence and the intimidation of black voters at the polls, prompting the boards to throw out enough votes to elect Republicans.

HAYES HAD BEEN SKEPTICAL AT THE outset of the effort on his behalf and had kept himself scrupulously in the background, but he became convinced that there had been severe intimidation of black Republican voters, and having promised to protect the rights of blacks in his July letter accepting the Republican nomination, he grew confident in the justice of those working for his cause. Tilden, to the consternation of the Democratic Party, left the development of a post-election strategy to others, despite his past brilliance as a campaign operative, although he clearly signaled that he would have no part in any effort to install him in the presidency by force.

Instead, he concentrated on producing a volume, soon to appear on the desks of all members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, reviewing the history of counting presidential votes (the clause in the Constitution says only, "The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and the House of Representatives, open all the certificates and

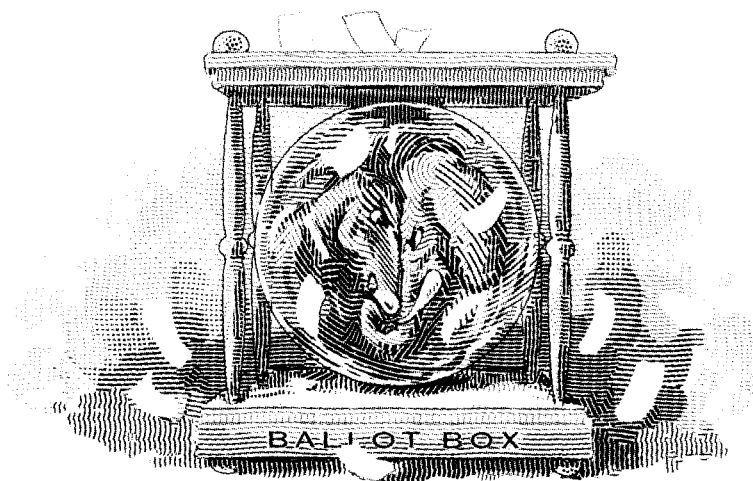
the votes shall then be counted”), denying the theory (subscribed to by Hayes) that the Senate president determines which votes to count in cases of ambiguity, insisting instead that the houses of Congress must each decide on the validity of certificates, and concluding that, if the houses disagree so that the votes of some states go uncounted and no candidate receives an Electoral College majority, the election recurs to the House of Representative, voting by states, as the Constitution clearly provides.

In the winter of 1876-77, the president of the Senate was Republican Senator Thomas W. Ferry of Michigan, Vice President Henry Wilson having died a year before. The Senate was in Republican hands still (in pre-20th Amendment days the terms of Congressmen and the president ended on March 4), and since senators were still chosen by state legislatures, the composition of the incoming Senate was not fully settled in any event—but the House was Democratic, not only as a body but in a majority of state delegations. It might be no surprise that the two candidates’ constitutional opinions on the count corresponded to their interest in the present contest, but in fact both positions had a history that extended back to the early days of the republic. A bill to clarify the counting procedure had been introduced in 1800, but failed to pass, nor was the process elaborated in the 12th Amendment separating the presidential and vice-presidential ballots, which repeated the original language of the Counting Clause word for word. In the first three-quarters of the 19th century, there were often disputes over what votes to count, usually concerning certificates from electors in new states admitted between election day and counting day, and the custom developed of announcing the results in the alternative, once with, once without the challenged votes.

REMARKABLY, OVER ALL THAT TIME, such disputes never made a difference for who won the majority of electors. In 1865, with Republicans controlling both houses, a rule was accepted by both that allowed either house to discard the electoral votes of any state that it considered invalid, something done several times in each of the following elections. In 1876, Senate Republicans foresaw the danger in this rule with the House now belonging to the Democrats, and they withdrew their consent to it. Thus, when the Electoral College votes began to arrive—with separate returns from Republican and Democratic electors in Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina, as well as Oregon—Congress was, in Roy Morris’s term, at a stalemate. Separate committees set

up by the Senate and the House to investigate the disputes resulted in predictably partisan votes. With memories of the failure of the lame duck session in 1860 still fresh, and with no one in a mood for a resumption of civil war, writes Morris, Congress decided to seek a compromise—over the objections, by the way, of both candidates. Thus was born the Electoral Commission Act of January 1877.

Under the Act, a fifteen-member Commission was established to determine the disputed votes. The count would proceed alphabetically by state in the presence of both houses; when a state submitted multiple returns, the issue was referred to the Commission, whose decision would be accepted as binding, except in the unlikely event that the two houses concurred in reversing its decision. Five members of the Commission would be appointed by the House (three Democrats and two Republicans), five by the Senate (three Republicans and two Democrats), and five would be members of



the Supreme Court. The law specified which members of the Court by naming their circuits. It appointed Democrats Nathan Clifford and Stephen Field, Republicans Samuel Miller and William Strong, and then gave these four the responsibility of choosing the fifth justice, the 15th man.

As the bill was drafted and debated, it was generally assumed that they would agree on Justice David Davis, who, despite having been Lincoln’s campaign manager in 1860 and a Lincoln appointee to the Court, had since broken with the Republicans and had even entertained the prospect of running for president on a third-party ticket in 1872. On the very day in mid-January that the bill was moving through Congress, however, the legislature of Illinois surprisingly elected Davis to the Senate as a Democrat. The law was passed with bipartisan support, but from more Democrats than Republicans, and Davis announced his intention to resign from the Court after March 4, and removed his name from consideration for

the 15th seat. That post went instead to Justice Joseph Bradley, a Grant appointee to the Court who nevertheless was deemed “entirely satisfactory” by the New York congressman who had managed Tilden’s campaign.

IN EARLY FEBRUARY THE COUNT BEGAN, stopping at Florida, the first state in dispute. The Commission heard lawyers from both sides in closed meetings, and the critical question quickly became whether the Commission would “go behind” the returns: Would the Commission admit evidence (thousands of pages had been prepared) as to which group of electors had actually been chosen by the voters in each state, or would they restrict their inquiry to determining which slate of electors came certified by the proper authorities in the state? Apparently the first 14 votes were predictable, with everything hinging on the vote of Justice Bradley, who was last to speak. He produced a characteristically closely argued opinion in favor of the latter alternative, resulting in acceptance of the Republican slate for Florida—the lame duck Reconstruction governor still having been in office on the day the Electoral College voted (December 6), although by January the Florida Supreme Court had declared his Democratic rival duly elected in the concurrent state race. One-by-one the challenges came to the Commission, and each time the decision was made not to “go behind” the certificates.

A complication came in Oregon, where the voters had indisputably gone for Hayes but one of his electors was discovered after election day to be a fourth-class postmaster, made ineligible by the Constitution as a federal officeholder from serving as elector. The problematic man had resigned his postmastership, then had been reappointed elector by his two colleagues, and the three had cast their votes for Hayes. The Democratic governor of the state, acting in concert with party officials in New York, had refused to recognize him, insisting instead that the fourth highest vote-getter, a Tilden elector of course, should fill the vacancy of the ineligible man—thus clinching the race for Tilden even if Hayes was awarded every disputed Southern vote; or, if the seat was declared vacant, at least throwing the election to the House, where Tilden could presume a victory.

The Commission, however, voted to go behind the Oregon governor’s certificate far enough to determine who under Oregon law was charged with certifying the vote, and settling on the secretary of state rather than the governor, called Oregon, too, for Hayes. Although the Speaker of the House and some members of his party sought to delay the inevi-

table, a coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats allowed the count to conclude in the wee hours of March 2. Hayes, whose train from Ohio had waited in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, until the counting was complete, finally came to town, dined with the outgoing president at the White House, and on Monday, March 5, took the presidential oath on the Capitol steps.

ROY MORRIS, LIKE HIS DEMOCRATIC FOREBears, does indeed “go behind” the formalities of the Electoral Commission, and one is glad he does, for he tells a fascinating tale. Indeed, he is at his most entertaining in his chapters on the nominating conventions in June 1876; and his portraits of his main protagonists are judicious and insightful. He gives Hayes his due as a man of personal valor in war and studied moderation in peace, upright in conduct if not immune to the chief political prejudices (e.g., anti-Catholicism) of his party in his place and time. Morris admires Tilden—first for his intelligence and devotion to the principles of the Democratic Party, second for his skill in political organizing, and third for his graciousness in defeat—but remains puzzled at Tilden’s disengagement, first from the campaign for the presidency, then from the battle over the count. Even if the mores of the time did not permit active campaigning on one’s own behalf, this successful railroad lawyer surely knew how to orchestrate his own staff and how to defend his apparent popular victory. Morris sees the irony that a campaign run on the issue of “reform” should come down to a contest of partisan intransigence, and no doubt Tilden did, too, perhaps slackening his will for the fight.

Probably the most significant part of Morris’s book is his attempt to undercut the generally accepted claim that the Democrats had intimidated freedmen’s voting in South Carolina, Florida, and especially Louisiana. To be sure, Morris holds no brief for the Old South. Like most modern historians of the election, he discredits the former commonplace that the Republicans cut a deal in 1876 to win the presidency in exchange for ending Reconstruction. The last Reconstruction legislation had passed the lame-duck Congress in early 1875, before Democrats took control of the House. “Redeemer” governments (hostile to Reconstruction) controlled most of the Southern states. Grant’s refusal, in 1875, to support the Republican governor of Mississippi when he asked for federal troops in the aftermath of a race riot had signaled, in effect, the federal government’s acquiescence in eventual “redemption.” And the same session of Congress that was weighing the election refused to appropriate money to pay the troops before the new Congress was set to reconvene. More to the point, there was never any question that a Democratic victory in the presidential election would mean the end of Reconstruction.

Still, Morris looks at some of the evidence introduced in Louisiana and pronounces it lacking. Not only was the credibility of one of the most sensational witnesses to pre-election violence suspect, but census figures show that the Republicans overestimated the size of the black population and so made too much of the shortfall of Republican votes. Moreover, the canvassing boards overlooked other explanations besides the intimidation of black voters. In at least one instance, no votes were cast for Republicans in a Louisiana parish because the GOP had failed to print any ballots (the rule in those days was to bring one’s own), and Morris adduces evidence as well of Redeemer Democratic efforts to win black votes. To be sure, his aim is narrative, not systematic, so he does not try to turn his anecdotes into statistics. It is enough to discredit the Republican argument, he thinks, and to let rumor and inference do the rest.

FRAUD OF THE CENTURY IS WEAKESt where Rehnquist’s book is strongest, in its account of the work of the Commission itself. Though the Chief Justice carefully supplies the context needed to assess the arguments made in Washington that February, nicely reviewing the ups and downs of the Grant Administration, supplying short biographies for every major character, and even previewing the Hayes Administration’s eventual success, his point is not so much to explain the election as to vindicate the Commission’s role in it, and that means especially to vindicate the judgment of Justice Bradley.

Bradley was bitterly reviled at the time, accused of changing his mind overnight on the crucial Florida vote because “during the whole of that night Judge Bradley’s house in Washington was surrounded by carriages of visitors who came to see him”—an accusation given some credence by modern historians because of a “secret history” completed by Tilden’s campaign manager, Abram Hewitt, shortly before his death 25 years later. Hewitt’s account included the tale of one reputed visitor, John G. Stevens, who claimed he had visited Bradley after midnight, and had read the Justice’s draft opinion in favor of the Tilden electors, only to hear Bradley read the opposite to the Commission the following day.

Reprinting Bradley’s subsequent public letter denying both that he had received any visitors at all that evening and that he had written an opinion contrary to the one he later gave, Rehnquist carefully impeaches the charges against Bradley. Invoking the hearsay rule, the Chief Justice argues that Hewitt’s version of Stevens’s account was less than credible, because it was taken in secret years after the event from an eventual suicide who was known for fits of depression, because it came with instructions that it not be published until all the parties concerned had

died (and thus were unavailable for comment), and because it was inconsistent with Bradley’s known work habits and the justices’ usual practice of secrecy in preparing their legal opinions. Morris, whose book appeared first, repeats the old charge, as well as another based on circumstantial evidence linking Bradley to a railroad magnate apparently active on Hayes’s behalf in the post-election campaign—a charge the Chief Justice dismisses without mention and that Morris himself does not pursue.

More interesting from the point of view of the present is Rehnquist’s defense of the Committee’s substantive decision not to “go behind” the states’ electoral votes. He points out that members of the parties had taken different positions on this issue in previous instances or when considering general legislation without an actual contest at stake. He describes the character of 19th-century federalism, contrasting it to our usual assumptions of federal competence and capability today. He patiently alerts the reader to the suspicion of the electoral process that might have ensued had the federal government claimed the responsibility to investigate national elections. And he carefully avoids drawing parallels between the dispute in 1876 and the dispute in 2000, in which he played, of course, so significant a role. In short, he defends the good faith of the Commissioners and defends as well the formal constitutionalism of their decision, without quite defending the substantive justice of the outcome, for even as a historian he does not undertake to reassess the findings of the canvassing board in Louisiana, much less to vindicate their deeds. If one sees in this choice a formula that also explains some aspects of the jurisprudence of his Court, one would not be altogether off the mark.

EACH BOOK HAS THE VIRTUE OF TAKing seriously the political purposes and constraints of the men whose deeds they recount, and together they reproduce the perspectives of the age they study. But they share a common limit: both authors refrain from drawing out the larger lessons in the tale. While this may be a welcome corrective to accounts that dismiss the episode as sordid proof of the need for Progressive refurbishment of American constitutionalism, it is also a missed opportunity. For starters, every aspect of the 1887 statute that now structures the process for Electoral College voting (about which we all learned in 2000) can be explained as a remedy for some specific mischief in the embarrassment of 1876-1877—for example, the “safe harbor” deadline, requiring certification of electors six days before their scheduled vote. This measure would prevent a recurrence of the situation in Florida in December 1876, when the canvassing board announced its results on the very day the electors were to vote.

Moreover, though Rehnquist does not say so and only hints at it obliquely in an epilogue, the contemporaneous dissatisfaction with the Commission process (evidenced in there being no such machinery established in the 1887 law) may have influenced the justices' decision in 2000 to take the case judicially, figuring that otherwise they might have been called individually to play a role in the dispute's eventual political settlement and that, given the precedent, it was better to act quickly and from the bench. And what student of American government can fail to marvel at the surprising parallels? Both disputes involved Florida, included accusations of intimidation of black voters, and entailed the Republicans' stressing official channels and the Democrats' insisting on "going behind" the forms.

If the story of America is not the Progressive

tale of the cooperative commonwealth, but a complex matter of competing interests and ambitions, one wonders what other deep patterns lurk in our political history that might illuminate our politics today. Does the fact that Reconstruction ended in a fiasco teach us something about moral passion's ugly underside in politics? Did Republican success in 1876-77 show something about the strength of moral confidence even in the face of recalcitrant majority will? And in the end, was the result so unsatisfactory given the circumstances—and in comparison to our recent debacle? After all, the coalition that Hayes had to assemble in order to win was the beginning of a coalition that he needed in order to govern, because both depended on Congress, not a *deus ex machina* like our modern Court.

Whatever their limits, both books can be

read with profit by students of American politics today. Who can fail to admire the Chief Justice for undertaking this study—and for humbly submitting his views in a form accessible to the general reader, even at the risk of disproving his point that extrajudicial service is now inadvisable for a busy modern judge? And thanks too go to Roy Morris and those like him who persist in writing political history, reminding us that the shrill excesses of our present partisanship are at once nothing new and something to be expected, especially if we learn nothing about the past except what our fellow partisans think fit for us to hear.

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Essay by Andrew E. Busch

ROLLING REALIGNMENT

THE VOTES WERE BARELY COUNTED ON election night when the national media began interpreting the Republican victory. Within hours, a consensus had emerged: George W. Bush and Republican Senate and House candidates had (alas) won, but their success was tainted. The GOP trifecta was another sign of the extreme polarization and growing bitterness of American politics. The "red states" and "blue states" stared at each other across a cultural abyss, a "values" divide that pitted the cosmopolitan coasts and big cities against the nation's more conservative heartland.

This interpretation seems plausible, at first. The tone of the campaign, while mild in comparison to the campaigns of 1800 and 1864, for example, was as shrill as any in recent memory, thanks in no small part to George Soros and Michael Moore. The dramatic rise in voter turnout helped signal the election's contentiousness. Moral values were called the most important issue by 22% of voters, more than any other single category (though terrorism and Iraq together were cited by 34%). Indeed, one of the greatest voting divides measured by demographic category was between those who attend church regularly and those who do not.

When all was said and done, the red state-blue state divide of 2000 seemed more entrenched than ever. Of the 30 states that had voted for George Bush in 2000, 29 voted for him again in 2004. Of the 21 states (including the District of Columbia) that voted for Al Gore in 2000, 19 voted for John Kerry in 2004. Only three states

shifted, and these shifts had the effect of rationalizing the map of 2000. The one island of red (New Hampshire) in a sea of northeastern blue was eliminated; the one island of blue (New Mexico) in an otherwise red Rocky Mountain west was likewise extinguished, and Iowa's reversal from blue to red simply expanded the size of the red zone and smoothed out the border between the two regions.

Nor was George Bush's 51-48% win, with 286 electoral votes, particularly impressive by historical standards. He beat the odds that say that incumbent presidents either win big, or do not win. One would have to go back to the presidential election of 1916 to find an incumbent winning with such a narrow margin.

Closing the Gap

DESPITE THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM, however, there are many reasons to believe that 2004 was more significant than Democrats or much of the media were willing to admit.

First, as many commentators pointed out, Bush's 51% was not an inconsiderable achievement in a country that had failed to produce a popular presidential majority for any candidate since 1988. Furthermore, the president had modest coattails in the House and more substantial coattails in the Senate. Given its lack of competitive districts, a small gain in the House is all that most presidential winners can now expect. By way of comparison, Bush lost

2 seats in the House and 4 seats in the Senate in 2000 (including seats in Missouri and Georgia); Clinton gained back only 9 House seats in 1996 (after losing 53 in 1994) and lost 2 Senate seats; in 1992, Clinton's Democrats actually lost 10 House seats; and George H.W. Bush lost 3 House seats when he was elected in 1988. Even Ronald Reagan, when he won 49 states in his 1984 landslide, gained only 14 House seats while losing 2 in the Senate. The numbers were not big, but 2004 was a comprehensive party victory of the sort we have not seen since 1980.

Perhaps more importantly, a closer examination of the voting data shows decreased, not increased, polarization. If 2004 had been a really polarizing election, one would expect that Bush's vote percentages would go up in the red states compared with 2000, but that they would go down in the blue states. But this is not what happened. A comparison of the Bush vote in 2000 with his vote in 2004 shows that in the 29 red states, he gained an average of 3.3 percentage points. In the 19 blue states, he gained an average of 3.0 percentage points. (In the three switchers, he gained an average of 1.7%.)

Bush gained big in reliably liberal bastions like Hawaii (+8 percentage points), Rhode Island (+7), Connecticut and New Jersey (+6), New York (+5), and Massachusetts (+4). Altogether, he improved his vote proportion in 48 states—of which only 5 improved by less than 1%. His vote share dipped in only two states, one very blue (Vermont, where he fell

from 40.7 to 38.9%) and one very red (South Dakota, from 60.3 to 59.9%). An examination of voters by type of community shows that Bush's biggest gain by far was among big-city dwellers (+13 percentage points), while his suburban and rural support remained stable. He made bigger gains among women than among men, bigger gains among Hispanics than among non-Hispanic whites, bigger gains among Jews and Catholics than among Protestants, bigger gains among rare churchgoers than frequent churchgoers, bigger gains among non-gun owners than among gun owners. In short, Bush did extraordinarily well in his base, but his gains came primarily from the Democratic base and those in the middle. The only reason he did not win more blue states was that he started off in them so far behind. These observations open up a new possibility, one so contrary to the conventional wisdom that it might be pronounced heretical by the high priests of the *New York Times*. Perhaps the polarization that grew through the 1990s peaked in 2000—and actually began to recede in 2004. At the very least, it must be acknowledged that George W. Bush gained across the board, in virtually every region and every demographic group.

Given this picture, it is not unreasonable to ask again whether we are in the midst of a Republican realignment. To begin with, one can conduct the simple exercise of comparing today's Republican dominance of governmental institutions with, say, the situation in early 1968, when Democrats controlled the presidency, both houses of Congress, and an overwhelming majority of state legislatures. Clearly, something fundamental has changed. Contrary to Democratic hopes, 1968 and 1980 were not flukes; 1994 was not a fluke; and now, for the first time, Republicans have put together the full package.

Bush's Negatives

ANOTHER WAY OF LOOKING AT THIS question is to think about the disadvantages of each side this year—that is, the weaknesses that each candidate had to overcome in order to win.

Bush faced numerous obstacles. First, he started in a weak position due to the controversy surrounding the 2000 election. His opponents were bitter and well-organized. No president elected in similarly contentious circumstances—John Quincy Adams in 1824, Rutherford B. Hayes in 1876, Benjamin Harrison in 1888—managed to get reelected.

Furthermore, events worked against Bush. The economy, though much stronger than in 1992 or 1980, years when incumbents were defeated, still presented a mixed picture. Ominously, key states like Ohio had suffered from a heavy loss of manufactur-

ing jobs. Regardless of the objective economic data, Americans were not upbeat about the economic picture.

Then there was the war in Iraq, which began as a brilliant military success but quickly became bogged down; the terrorists managed to inflict a slow but steady stream of U.S. casualties. Indeed, the whole rationale for the war was called into question when the United States failed to find stockpiles of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Between Iraq and economic concerns, Bush's job approval rating fell below 50% for most of the half-year prior to the election, and was never far above it.

During the fall campaign, the president was besieged by bad news that might have cost him reelection. The October jobs report showed an increase of 96,000 jobs, a rate not fast enough to keep up with growth in the labor force (three days after the election, the numbers for August and September were revised upward by more than 100,000). Violence escalated in Iraq, at the same time Charles Duelfer released his report concluding decisively that Saddam had ended his WMD program after the first Gulf War in 1991. Oil prices spiked above \$50 a barrel, leading to a sharp rise in gasoline prices at the pump. A flu vaccine shortage exacerbated national concerns about health care. The media played up a questionable last-minute story about missing explosives in Iraq.

Not only did bad news pile up, but the mainstream media piled on. It is difficult to think of a recent election in which the mainstream media was so uniformly, so vehemently, and so transparently working for one candidate and against the other. From CBS's forged Air National Guard documents, to ABC news chief Mark Halperin's admonition not to hold Kerry as accountable as Bush, to the last-minute explosives story, the mainstream media reverted to the 19th-century model of a partisan press. Virtually no negative stories about Kerry were ever pursued. Instead, a great deal of media energy was exerted providing cover for Kerry whenever a bad story threatened to break through. The Duelfer Report actually contained quite a bit of exoneration for Bush, not least in the revelation that Saddam intended to resume his WMD program as soon as sanctions collapsed—an event that was imminent—but this news was systematically de-emphasized. *Newsweek* editor Evan Thomas judged, over the summer, that all told, most journalists were working for Kerry and that their support was worth 15 percentage points on Election Day (a figure he later revised to "maybe" 5 points, when it was clear Kerry was not pulling away).

And, of course, Bush had to overcome the consequences of his own mistakes. Two stand out as potentially crucial. One was the decision in April 2004 to pull back instead of crushing the insurgents in Fallujah, a choice for which

Bush, and the men in the field, paid dearly for the next seven months. The other was the decision, against his better political and constitutional judgment, to sign the McCain-Feingold campaign reform bill. The massive and relentless attacks launched against Bush by advocacy groups (the so-called 527s), and the lack of a Republican response until late in the game, had their genesis in McCain-Feingold.

Yet despite all of this, Bush won.

Kerry's Record

KERRY ALSO FACED DISADVANTAGES. He began the campaign with little hope of significantly cracking the Republican base in the South and non-coastal West. This meant that Bush was free to poach in places like New Jersey, Wisconsin, and Minnesota (and, of course, Iowa and New Mexico). Kerry therefore had to play defense on his own turf for a large part of the campaign, and had to hope that he could capture the few red states that were in play.

Kerry faced this situation because he was—as Republicans never tired of pointing out—a Massachusetts liberal. Though many Democrats would later complain that Kerry erred by allowing the GOP to define him, this line of thinking ignores the fact the Kerry had spent three decades in public life defining himself. This is why he could not talk about his record in the Senate, which would normally form the centerpiece of any candidate's campaign. And it was why he could not compete in large swaths of the country.

In the end, the challenger was without issues, despite the bad news and the media's help. Whatever its problems, the economy was doing well enough that most academic election models were able to predict Bush's win. At any rate, there was never much prospect that Kerry could do better than fight Bush to a draw on the economy, given actual conditions. In the states Kerry had to win—like Ohio, Missouri, Florida, and West Virginia—he was simply on the wrong side of the social issues. And Bush possessed and maintained a significant edge on national security, even including Iraq.

Kerry's disadvantage in this area owed much to Bush's demonstrated strength, but also owed more than a little to Kerry's own record, the record of his party for the last 30 years, and his lack of clarity on Iraq. Lest anyone think that a different Democratic candidate (other than Joseph Lieberman) would have done better on that score, it is important to remember that Kerry's desire to have it both ways was intimately connected with the division among Democratic voters—some of whom wanted out now and some of whom wanted the war prosecuted with greater efficiency. Any candidate would have faced the same dilemma, and most would have

ended up where Kerry did: for the \$87 billion, before being against it.

Finally, while Kerry was aided by the mainstream media, its aid was not as useful as it once would have been. The rise of alternative media, including cable television, talk radio, and the "blogosphere," meant that outlets like CBS had a watchdog. In 1968, the forged documents would likely have been accepted. In 2004, they were picked apart in a matter of hours. This change in the structure of the media turned out to be quite important.

Thus, Bush's disadvantages were primarily due to transient circumstances (perhaps a bit like Harry Truman in 1948), while Kerry's disadvantages were deeper and more structural (like Thomas Dewey's). This is no small clue that Republicans now hold the high cards, all other things being equal.

A Realigning Election?

IF THERE HAS BEEN A REPUBLICAN REALIGNMENT, though, it is not like classic realignments of the past. Perhaps, as David

Mayhew argued in his book *Electoral Realignments* (2002), 1860 and 1932 were such extreme cases—revolving around civil war and the worst economic conditions in the nation's history—that they cannot serve as a realistic model. The Republicans may have demonstrated their strength in 2004—indeed, may have finally put all the pieces together—but the realignment started long ago. A "rolling realignment" is not a bad description, rolling through 1968, 1980, 1994, 2000, and 2002, the midterm elections that now appear as a foreshadowing of 2004.

A rolling realignment means, however, that this realignment could be closer to its end than its beginning. Democrats in 1964 saw an endless horizon of victory stretching out before them. Only now can we see that the New Deal alignment had actually reached its peak and was on the verge of a steep descent. That descent was, to some extent, unsurprising. The coalition was aging, new strains were developing, and most of the coalition's policy agenda had been achieved. On the other hand, there was nothing inevitable about the Democrats' collapse. On a pyre formed

by Vietnam, the Great Society's overambitious schemes, the embrace of the counterculture and left-wing isolationism in 1972, and dozens of controversial court decisions openly celebrated by liberals, the Democrats slowly immolated themselves. Meanwhile, an energized and organized conservative movement was preparing to come to power.

Will 2004 be for Republicans what 1964 was for Democrats, a moment of triumph followed by a season of loss? Or will 2004 be, as Karl Rove has argued, another 1900, a close but broad victory that lays the foundation for a generation of dominance? Everything will depend on the choices Republicans make, the choices Democrats make, and the events that both will have to confront. If history is any guide, for Republicans hubris will be a more dangerous adversary than Harry Reid.

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Essay by William J. Bennett

BUSH'S MANDATE

WHAT EMERGED FROM THE 2004 election was a moral consensus, and with it, something we might call a mandate. But it is not the mandate some are talking about.

Let's begin with some inescapable facts. George W. Bush is the first president of either party since Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936 to be reelected while gaining seats in both houses of Congress. President Bush won a majority of the popular vote (the first president in four elections to win a clear majority). He won by more votes (a margin of over 3 million) than Bill Clinton (both times), Jimmy Carter, Richard Nixon (in 1968), John F. Kennedy, or Harry Truman. The president increased his support from almost every sector imaginable: black voters (although only a little, by about 3 percentage points), Hispanic voters (13 points), Jewish voters (5 points), and Catholic voters (about 5 points, which translates, however, into at least 1.5 million votes, half of his margin of victory). Meanwhile, Tom Daschle became the first party leader in the Senate to be ousted in over 50 years, and Louisiana elected its first Republican Senator since Reconstruction.

So what happened? To use a phrase of the Left, people "thought globally and acted lo-

cally" in this election. We saw this especially on the moral issues offered up by ballot initiatives, the most prominent being gay "marriage." Amendments against gay marriage succeeded in all eleven states where they were on the ballot, even in liberal Oregon. In job-wracked Ohio, which delivered Bush's electoral-college victory, the amendment succeeded by over 60%; and Phil Burress, who organized the initiative there, registered 54,000 new voters on the strength of that issue alone. In Ohio, the black community voted for President Bush by a greater percentage than their national average, giving him 16% compared to 11% nationwide. As a result, Ohio, which may have lost more jobs than any other state, delivered a 118,000 vote majority to Bush because of something more important, apparently, than jobs.

According to the National Exit Poll, when asked, more voters cited "moral values" as their top issue than cited the economy, terrorism, or Iraq. Other polls revealed a moral values vote as well. Of course, the choices are not completely severable, nor are the issues suggested by the phrase "moral values" severable either. Terrorism and Iraq are linked; and there are deep moral dimensions to the war on terrorism—especially for Bush voters. To some voters, perhaps many,

"moral values" implied something about the character of the candidates. Bush voters clearly had a high opinion of President Bush's character when it came to such things as leadership, reliability, and credibility.

But surely, some meant what we usually mean by moral values—issues of life, family, country, decency, the coarsening of the culture. In the 2004 election we saw an emphatic rejection of political and cultural leftism on such matters for the second time in 30 years. The last time we experienced this emphatically was 1976, when Americans rejected McGovernism in the Democratic Party by nominating and then electing Jimmy Carter, the seemingly morally serious, and openly evangelical, candidate for president. The hopes and dreams for Jimmy Carter were dashed during his presidency (and he has been a great disappointment since), but in 1976 Carter was the most religious—and socially conservative—candidate.

The Return of the Left

FOR A QUARTER-CENTURY, THE CULTURAL Left was kept from dominating the Democratic Party. But in 2004, it returned. Back from exile, it was Michael

Moore, Hollywood, and prominent parts of the mainstream media (think CBS and the *New York Times*) that made leftist politics and culture central themes for the Democrats.

John Kerry may himself have been a Vietnam veteran who gave a fairly hawkish convention speech, but his votaries, his movement, took it all with a wink and a nod—as what he had to say to try to get elected. His supporters (unlike their platform) were against the war. They debated and argued against the war across the country and on national television, objecting to Abu Ghraib more than to Saddam Hussein. Their opposition was so deep that John Kerry and John Edwards refused to sit through a Joint Session of Congress address by Iyad Allawi (the only leader in the Arab world seeking to build a democratic state) and then allowed their spokesman to call him “a puppet.” They harped on a putative failure in Tora Bora more than they saluted Afghanistan’s free elections. They obsessed on our failures—and we had failures—but they ignored our successes, and we certainly had those too. So, in foreign policy—on the conduct of the war—a part of the 1960s Left (the blame-America-firsters) was back, and seemingly in charge.

A clear demonstration of this was how Michael Moore’s message in his movie *Fahrenheit 9/11* gradually became indistinguishable from the Democratic Party’s message. This was dangerous, because Michael Moore had said incredible things—that Americans are dumb, that George Bush was a deserter from the military (desertion is a federal crime), and that Iraq’s bloodthirsty thugs were the moral equivalent of our Founding Fathers. Yet the Democrats embraced Michael Moore and invited him into the Democratic sanctum sanctorum: first, at an official campaign rally for General Wesley Clark, where he had called President Bush a “deserter”; and later at the Washington, D.C., premier of *Fahrenheit 9/11*, attended by such Democratic luminaries as 9/11 commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste, DNC chairman Terry McAuliffe, Senator Tom Daschle, and Senator Tom Harkin. Finally, and triumphantly, Moore was given full and almost royal access to the Democratic National Convention, garnering the largest and most enthusiastic crowds, and availing himself of a prime seat in President Jimmy Carter’s box.

All this was predictable, long before John Kerry’s Democratic acceptance speech. Before the summer conventions, we already knew what the Democrats had done: they had nominated the most liberal member of the U.S.

Senate. They put leftism front and center, and they wore it with pride.

Heart and Soul

IN THIS WAY, THE DEMOCRATS IN GENERAL, and John Kerry in particular, fundamentally misunderstood the heart and soul of this country. Those words—heart and soul—are Kerry’s words, not mine. He used them when he attended a July fundraiser at Radio City Music Hall in New York City. Senator Kerry sat through a Hollywood performance where John Cougar Mellencamp sang a song entitled “Texas Bandito,” where Meryl Streep caustically questioned President Bush’s commitment to Jesus, where a comedian said “Latins for Republicans is like roaches for Raid,” and where



Whoopi Goldberg described the president—and his name—in pornographic terms. At the conclusion of this “Concert for John Kerry,” the senator claimed that what was said there “conveyed the heart and soul of America.” (Tapes of the event, though much requested, were never released.)

At that moment, American business, which often knows best what Americans want, think, and feel, got it. The Democratic Party did not. Immediately after this concert, Slim Fast fired Whoopi Goldberg as a spokeswoman. Slim Fast knew more about the American heart and soul than did the Kerry campaign or the DNC. And so their campaign went on and on—with record Democratic fundraising and with Democrats outspending Republicans in “527” attack ads questioning the president’s military service as well as his honesty. Al Gore told large audiences that the president “betrayed this country,” and compared the administra-

tion to Nazis (“digital brown shirts”). Howard Dean remained on the hustings throughout 2004, intoning that the president had “lied,” and that the “Republicans are essentially the best propaganda machine since Lenin.” John Kerry repeatedly said that President Bush lied about going to war. Tom Harkin called Dick Cheney a “coward.” NAACP president Kweisi Mfume (who has since announced his resignation) said President Bush would take us back to the days of Jim Crow segregation. Max Cleland charged that President Bush was AWOL during Vietnam. Ted Kennedy (who had rescued Kerry from Howard Dean during the primaries by showing up to burnish Kerry’s liberal credentials) said the Iraq war “was made up in Texas...the whole thing was a fraud,” and that “Iraq was George Bush’s Vietnam.” The list goes on and on. High-ranking Republican spokesmen, by contrast, made no such ad hominem attacks. There was no Republican Michael Moore. The worst charge hurled against Kerry was that he was a flip-flopper, to which the Democrats replied, no, he was a consistent liberal. Or was that a moderate? At any rate, he flip-flopped consistently.

The country would not, and could not, swallow what Kerry represented nor what his supporters sold—not those words, not this kind of leftism. Kerry no more knew the heart and soul of this country than did his advisors. They tried to leverage unprecedented anger into a fury of anti-war sentiment, something that almost never works in wartime here. And they missed the “heart and soul” elsewhere: Bill Clinton (who knows something about how to run against Republicans) instructed Kerry to campaign in strong support of the initiatives against gay “marriage,” but to no avail. Three days after the election, Clinton criticized Kerry for merely endorsing these initiatives “once or twice, instead of 3,000 times.”

The Left argued—and has been arguing since the election—we know what this moral values thing is all about: that the right wing, and the Christian Right, had captured the Bush campaign. Many on the Left still cling to this notion. Bill Maher stated, after the election, that “the Christian Right is hijacking this country.” Garry Wills wrote, “Where else do we find fundamentalist zeal, a rage at secularism, religious intolerance, fear of and hatred for modernity?” Maureen Dowd, of the *New York Times*, wrote: “W. ran a jihad in America so he can fight one in Iraq—drawing a devoted flock of evangelicals, or ‘values voters,’ as they call themselves, to the polls by opposing abortion, suffocating stem cell research, and supporting a con-

stitutional amendment against gay marriage.” In fact, what President Bush stood for, ran on, and won on is a center-right morality, which we might call common moral sense. America has not turned far-right. What the president stood for is mainstream. In this election, the voters affirmed both that the Left’s political message does not resonate in America, and that the far Right does not govern America.

Moreover, President Bush did not manipulate “a devoted flock of evangelicals”—in fact, they were out in front of him and his campaign on many issues, and often frustrated over what they regarded as the White House’s indecisiveness. To be sure, President Bush is conservative on many things, but his conservatism leaves plenty of room to his right. Yes, Bush drew the support of evangelical Christians and should have: he is deeply sympathetic to much that, rightly, troubles them. Yet evangelicals’ support of him is not the biggest part of the electoral story, because Bush drew very large support from Catholics, and even raised his numbers among Jews (who gave him more support than to any Republican in four presidential elections—in fact, the Orthodox Jewish community gave him 69% of their vote). Plain numbers: Bush received just over 60 million votes; approximately 20 million of those votes came from evangelicals. Forty million came from other people.

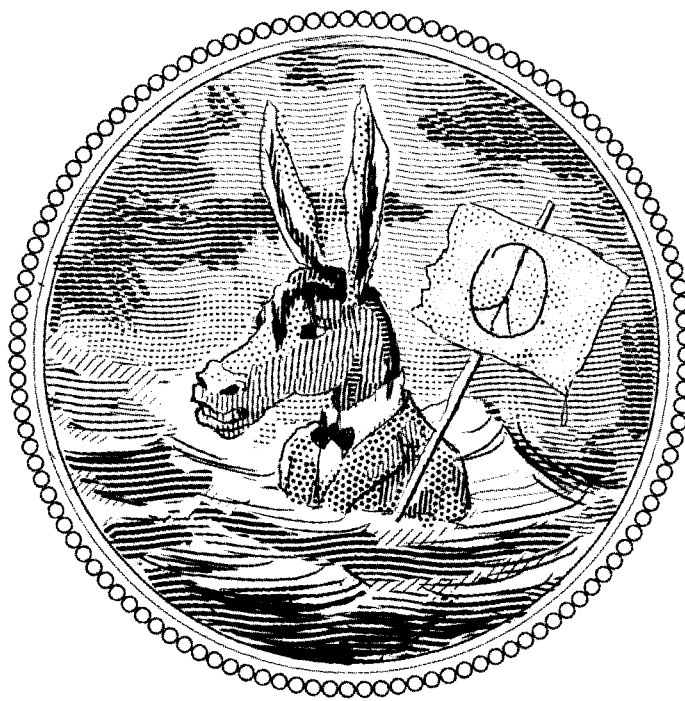
Bush did not campaign vociferously on ending abortion; he campaigned against partial birth abortion (which Kerry supports, and a vast majority of Americans oppose). The president did not suffocate stem cell research; he was the first president to fund it, and then barred further federal funding of it. President Bush did support a constitutional amendment to bar gay marriage—but so did voters in every state where they could add such a ban to their state constitutions. In short, the president campaigned from the middle, or the middle-right, and he won.

A Moral Agenda

HAVING WON A MANDATE FOR COMMON moral sense, what will President Bush do with it? In his first press conference, he provided an initial outline of the agenda: “Social Security and tax reform, moving this economy forward, education, fighting and winning the war on terror.” Is this a values agenda? Well it may not be the values agenda the religious Right would like to emphasize—

and some have said so already—but it is a values agenda nonetheless. Social Security and tax reform do speak to family values—and morality. A robust reform of Social Security is long over-due, and President Bush is the first candidate to have the courage to speak about it and campaign on it. Also, for as long as I can remember, conservatives have looked to the tax code to support the American family, ranging from such measures as the elimination of the marriage penalty to the child tax credit.

I would like to see the president and his party build on these reforms. He should seek more and better school choice in the No Child Left Behind law. Currently, it allows only public-school choice; it should include private-school choice as well. We should move forward with a reauthorization of welfare reform



featuring a strong marriage component and a renewed effort on faith-based initiatives. We should seek the defunding of Title X family planning—and instead, put more emphasis on abstinence programs for young people. We should fight a stronger and more public war on drugs. Perhaps we will need a renewed federal Defense of Marriage Act or Federal Marriage Amendment. And, last but not least, a vigorous backing of a constitutionalist federal judiciary. For better or worse (mostly, worse) Tocqueville was right: “There is hardly a political question in the United States which does not sooner or later turn into a judicial one.” Ultimately, the courts must secure President Bush’s domestic legacy. We have been too reticent for too long on court appointments. The president won the election; he should nominate strong federal judges, over and over again, and campaign

for their approval, over and over again.

But there is more. We are fighting a war. The election revealed that the American people want a physical defense of the country as well as a moral defense—and they do not separate the two. Ronald Reagan upheld the defense of the country on a moral basis, as did Abraham Lincoln (and whose fervent opposition to slavery was based in moral conviction). The war on terrorism and the war in Iraq are not separate—and they are not separate from the great moral cause of our time: freedom versus slavery, democracy versus tyranny, civilization versus barbarism.

The American Mainstream

THE REASON ALL OF THESE things are not severable is that they are all a function of what philosophers have called the moral point of view. And we have a president who has one.

On all these issues, we have a large, robust, and compelling agenda—a moral agenda—and, I might add, an eminently achievable agenda. Public opinion is everything, Lincoln observed, and this president now has a mandate based on public opinion. The time has come to pursue these goals with renewed energy from the executive branch. For this is a course of action resoundingly approved, not by extremists and radicals, but by a broad swath of Americans: the Right, the center Right, a little of the anti-terrorist center Left, and an awful lot of the center itself.

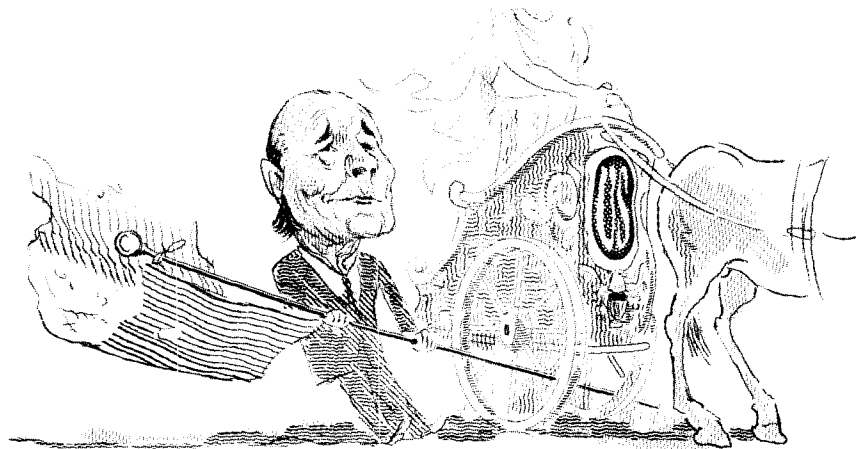
So, looking back at the election of 2004, we can say, with all due respect to William Butler Yeats, that the center can hold and is holding. This center—and the range of moral concerns it represents—is not the creature of extremists, jihadists, or radicals. It is the voice of the American mainstream—our neighbors and our friends—and accordingly, it garnered support at the polls from people all over this country, in every state and county, whether red or blue. Despite what the sore losers are saying, the colors that mattered most in this contest were the red, white, and blue.

William J. Bennett is the Washington Fellow of the Claremont Institute and the host of the nationally syndicated radio show, Bill Bennett’s Morning in America. This essay is adapted from a speech sponsored by the Heritage Foundation and the Claremont Institute, delivered on November 15 in Washington, D.C.

Book Review by Arnold Beichman

THE FRANCE OF JACQUES CHIRAC

The French Betrayal of America, by Kenneth R. Timmerman.
Crown Forum, 320 pages, \$25 (cloth), \$14.95 (paper)



AS A YOUNG BOY DURING AND AFTER World War I, I read everything I could find about the romantically named Lafayette Escadrille, the young Americans who became fighter pilots to help France in her war against Wilhelmine Germany. But living and thinking through the 20th and into the 21st century, I find myself torn between my boyish love for France and its culture and my despair over what France has become.

Kenneth Timmerman's *The French Betrayal of America* is a savage, heavily documented indictment of today's France, the France of Jacques Chirac, for whom the U.S. has become an enemy country.

It was Chirac who made Saddam Hussein the power he became in the Middle East. It was the French nuclear weapons establishment that had almost finished building a nuclear facility at Osirak, known derisively as O'Chirac, near Baghdad, when in 1981 Israel bombed it to rubble. Chirac built Osirak for Saddam even though in a 1975 interview Saddam had admitted: "The agreement with France is the first concrete step toward the production of the Arab atomic weapon."

By 1983, Iraq was purchasing 51.5% of all French arms exports. In the U.N. Security Council, France became Saddam's defender. Chirac's unbreakable friendship with Saddam propped up a regime concerning whose accomplishments the *Washington Post* observed (July 7, 2003): "An estimated 290,000 people are missing and believed to be buried in mass graves throughout Iraq. In a country of 22 million, that is more than 1 percent of the population, the equivalent of about 3.5 million people in the United States. The vast majority of these bodies have not been found."

Timmerman's book of revelations is an eye-

opener. Even in the days of the socialist François Mitterrand, he argues, France looked upon the U.S. as a dangerous rival. That fear of the U.S. increased when the Soviet Union fell: no more need for American protection against the Bolsheviks. In 1991, *L'Express* revealed that between 1987 and 1989 French intelligence had planted moles in the French offices of IBM, Texas Instruments, and Corning Glass to steal economic and industrial secrets on behalf of French state-owned enterprises. An NBC documentary discovered that French airlines regularly planted microphones in the seats of their first-class compartment, to record conversations of U.S. businessmen.

According to Timmerman, the U.S. is now reacting to French enmity with some harshness. For example, the French military attaché in Washington was informed that France would not be getting its usual slots at the March 2004 Red Flag exercise, NATO's premier live flying war game. And President Bush personally vetoed a request from the French chief of staff to visit CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa, Florida. Nonetheless, U.S. nuclear laboratories are still helping the French, the U.S. is still subsidizing the French nuclear weapons establishment, and, most unbelievable of all, the Bush Administration is offering Chirac the secrets of the U.S. national missile defense.

IN FRANCE TODAY, ANTI-SEMITISM, BOTH right-wing and left-wing, runs deep. Today the Paris Metro is no longer safe for Jews or those whom the Muslim gangs think are Jews. The Muslim population in France itself approaches 10% and is growing more influential each day. A recently published book, *La République des lâches* (The Republic of Cowards), mocks the French regime for its re-

treat before its Muslim inhabitants' anti-democratic behavior. For instance, instead of walking out of the stadium when the Marseillaise was booed at a French-Algerian soccer match, then-Prime Minister Lionel Jospin stayed on. And though the increasingly influential Muslim presence suffered a setback when the government forbade Muslim girls to wear their veils in school, separatist Muslims continue to demand that school gymnasiums and swimming pools be segregated.

One of the great errors in the aftermath of World War II was to have enshrined France among the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (see Jeremy Rabkin, "No Miracle in San Francisco," Summer 2004), leaving no room for democracies of far greater importance to the world today. If the president of France now regards America as an enemy country and French diplomacy is directed against the United States, all of which is fully and dramatically documented by Timmerman, it is time to think hard about what should be done.

Oh, and about those Americans who gave their lives fighting for French liberties, Timmerman tells this story: When Charles De Gaulle pulled France out of the NATO unified military command and ordered the United States to depart from bases in the Paris suburb of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, President Lyndon Johnson reportedly asked him if he also wanted us to take the graveyards full of our dead at Omaha Beach. Three belated cheers for LBJ.

Arnold Beichman, a Hoover Institution research fellow, is a columnist for the *Washington Times*. His updated biography Herman Wouk, the Novelist as Social Historian has just been published (*Transaction*).

MYTHICAL FRIENDS, MEET MYTHICAL ENEMIES

Our Oldest Enemy: A History of America's Disastrous Relationship with France,
by John J. Miller and Mark Molesky. Doubleday, 304 pages, \$24.95

INSPIRED BY THE CURRENT DISCORD OVER Iraq, John Miller and Mark Molesky try to set Franco-American relations in a larger context. Drawing on over three hundred years of history, they write to correct the myth—still common in both America and France—that the two countries are “sister republics” with shared ideals, purposes, and strategies; and that France is “our oldest ally,” with whom we have never been at war. The authors argue, *au contraire*, that “France has never been our friend, has always been our rival, and has often been our enemy.” If Americans had known this history, they would not have been so shocked at the French government’s effort to stop America from forming a military coalition to overthrow the fascist regime in Iraq; they would see that “cautious pessimism” about France’s political future is the most optimistic attitude that one can reasonably adopt; and they would temper any expectations that France might “ever become America’s steadfast ally.”

No one familiar with John Miller’s writing in the national press will be surprised that this book is amusing and sharply polemical. *Our Oldest Enemy*, in which Miller teams up with Mark Molesky, an Assistant Professor of History at Seton Hall University, has serious problems (more on that below), but it is full of informative details and thought-provoking arguments about serious matters, executed in a light style honed in the blogosphere to a competitive edge.

The thesis of the book is not new. Many commentators have noticed that the American and French people, in spite of their long association, are strikingly ignorant of each other and of their countries’ up-and-down relations. What is new is the authors’ insistence on France’s almost unrelieved moral squalor and political treachery. Literary provocateurs like Mark Twain have engaged in such sport, but generally not historians. They also differ from previous historians by emphasizing the continuity and pervasiveness of the countries’ animosity. Others have seen long periods in which there were few political relations to speak of, which helps explain both the mutual ignorance and forgetfulness. In contrast, Miller and Molesky basically fill their canvas with a continuous pattern of hostilities. When political disagreements falter, they shift to cultural hostilities.

With these two very questionable innova-

tions, Miller and Molesky correct the myth of eternal friendship by constructing an opposite myth of eternal animosity.

Their story begins not (as is more usual) with the alliance of France and America during the American Revolution, but with the four “French and Indian Wars” fought between France and Britain (and British Americans) from 1689 to 1760. During these wars the French often encouraged the Indians’ barbaric tactics against the British inhabitants, who vastly outnumbered the French as well as the Indians. The authors give lurid accounts of these disturbing events. The wars ended with a decisive setback for the French empire in North America—a setback that they claim inspired “many of the resentments and jealousies that would animate French attitudes toward Americans in the years to come.”

France had an opportunity to strike back at Britain by supporting the British Americans’ fight for independence. Miller and Molesky easily show (what Americans understood at the time, and should today), that the French government’s support for American independence was calculated to serve the national and imperial interests of France. Unfortunately, France’s contribution to the American Revolution “gave birth to the enduring myth of Franco-American solidarity.”

SUCH A MYTH, HOWEVER, SHOULD NOT have survived the next few decades, when Britain and France were constantly at war and America wisely chose to remain neutral. Revolutionary France clumsily tried to subvert America’s neutrality, and during President Adams’s administration France and America fought an undeclared naval war (1798-1800). This, coupled with the spectacle of the terrorism and militancy of the French Revolution and its culmination in Napoleon, made clear to most Americans that their republicanism and France’s were radically different, and held little promise of solidarity.

The Monroe Doctrine (1823) arose, not from fears of Britain, with whom America had fought a second war in 1812-1814, but from “a residual fear” of the French menace. Indeed, the first challenge to the Doctrine came from France, when, during the American Civil War, Napoleon III tried to set up a monarchy in Mexico. With the Union’s victory, this French

project soon collapsed.

However, one should ask: Had the Confederacy won its independence, might not a French-sponsored regime in Mexico have served the cause of human liberty by helping contain the slave power? The real question, after all, is whether France has been (and could be) a friend to liberty, rather than whether it has been a friend to this or that policy of certain English-speaking people in North America. That is, Miller and Molesky largely overlook the importance of regimes in politics. It is misleading to start the story, as they do, a century before the American regime exists. And it is even more misleading to treat “France” as an unchanging polity, as if it makes no difference whether the word refers to a monarchy, a Rousseau-inspired republic, an imperial despotism, a fascist puppet (the Vichy regime), or a liberal democracy.

The advent of the first durable and liberal French republic (the Third, from 1875 to the fall of France in 1940) attracted much American sympathy and support. The Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World—paid for by public fundraising (in France for the statue, in America for the base)—was a product of this new period of mutual attachment. Anti-Americanism in France was rare until unruly and “racially” segregated American soldiers arrived in large numbers in 1917. The Fourth Republic (1946-1958), a post-war revival of the Third, gave way to an improved Fifth Republic (1958-present), which has a more energetic executive and in principle should attract American understanding and support. (In 1948, Charles de Gaulle—proving himself no Bonapartist—had described his model for the Fifth Republic as “an organization of powers which would largely take into account the example furnished by the United States Constitution.”) If this young regime matures and settles in (it is still in formation: presidential and senatorial terms have just been reduced, to five and six years respectively), and economic prosperity continues, the Fifth Republic may earn more respect from French citizens and further ameliorate the political habits inherited from previous French regimes.

OUR OLDEST ENEMY NEGLECTS, TOO, the importance of French political thinking for American liberal democratic politics. One of the basic reasons for the differences between the American and French



revolutions was that French Revolutionaries—including even Lafayette and other acquaintances of Thomas Jefferson while he was in Paris at the beginning of the French Revolution—rejected the liberal spirit of Montesquieu in favor of the radical, uncompromising, and visionary spirit of Rousseau. *Our Oldest Enemy* mentions Montesquieu in another context but ignores the fact that his teaching, while neglected in the French Revolution, was influential in the American. “The celebrated Montesquieu” (as both Alexander Hamilton and James Madison called him in *The Federalist*) was a respected source of American constitutional thinking. But this fact does not further the book’s thesis.

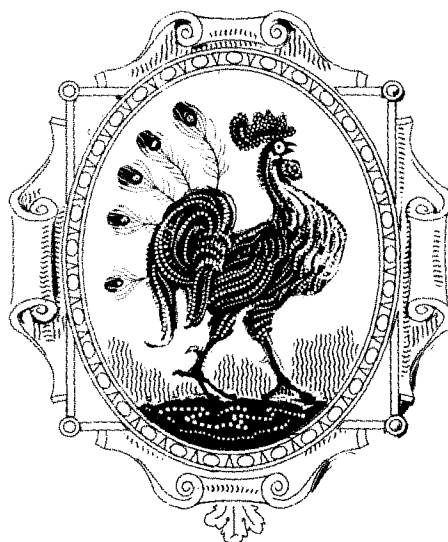
To fill the period from the Civil War to World War I with more differences that reflect badly on the French, Miller and Molesky turn from politics to morals and the fine arts, where they pronounce that the French unjustly “paid scant attention to American culture until the twentieth century,” and then treated it with “jealousy and resentment.” Ironically, “as both countries developed politically into modern, stable democracies... the level of cultural animosity between them would grow.”

This sounds neat, but it is not entirely persuasive. As the authors themselves show, the illiberal culture of postmodernity is as active in America as in France. It is also worth noting (as they do not) that the hard origins of contemporary postmodernism are not French but German (Nietzsche, Heidegger), and that many of the American outbreaks have come directly from German sources, as have the positivism and relativism infecting American life more generally.

Not every American writer and artist who flocked to France in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the authors note rightly, was enthralled by French moral and artistic decadence and ensnared by the false idols of the avant-garde. They suggest, nonetheless, that many Americans failed to do justice to their own literary culture, and uncritically admired that of the French. (Henry James is singled out here, somewhat unfairly.) They proudly insist that the best Americans who lived in France just got on with their work, rising above their dubious French (and other foreign) surroundings: “much of modern American literature was created through the deliberative act of ignoring the French—at least those who were not bartenders or ladies of the evening.” They do not point out that some American artists and writers were in Paris in order to rise above the racial hostility that they faced at home.

WHEN THEY ARRIVE AT THE GREAT War, Miller and Molesky really begin to lose their grip. You know something is seriously amiss when conservatives

find nothing critical to say about Woodrow Wilson! In 1917, America—at last—decided to “associate” itself with the Allies (actually becoming an ally would be too entangling). Here Miller and Molesky complain that President Wilson’s “bold and visionary plan to repair a broken collection of nation states” was scuppered by the dastardly French Prime Minister, Georges Clemenceau, “another in a long line of condescending and treacherous French leaders.” Clemenceau outmaneuvered Wilson at the Versailles peace conference, so the French could create “a settlement that would secure their own continental supremacy for decades to come.” Worse: after ruining Wilson’s great peace plan, they pursued their “reckless quest for mastery in Europe” by further efforts to keep the Germans from controlling the Rhineland.



One can debate the merits of Wilson’s plans for European peace based on “ethnic self-determination” heedless of military geography, but Winston Churchill had a point, in *The Second World War*, when he quoted Marshal Ferdinand Foch’s judgment on the Treaty of Versailles: “This is not a Peace. It is an Armistice for twenty years.” Foch said this because Wilson had blocked at the negotiating table Clemenceau’s demand that the treaty take the Rhineland out of German hands. France was thus rendered less defensible. After all, Germany had a record of trying to conquer France in the 19th century as well as in the war just ended, and believed (as was true) that its armies had never been decisively defeated. Astonishingly, Miller and Molesky assert that “the Second World War was as much the product of French intransigence and vengefulness as it was the result of Hitler’s lust for domination.”

Our Oldest Enemy’s take on Franco-American relations in the Second World War is also questionable. By the 1930s these stubborn, vengeful Frenchmen have morphed into blind cowards, unable to see the Nazis’ threat and

unwilling to fight them when they invade—all-too-eager, indeed, to collaborate in fascist projects. Not wanting to blame America for anything whatsoever (except for individual Americans’ occasional susceptibility to things French), and therefore paying no attention at all to America’s shortsighted non-involvement in European affairs in the 1920s and 1930s, the authors focus entirely on the failures of the French.

There were many such failures. But how could the French have pursued any policy that isolated them from the British? As the authors mention but do not think about, it was Britain as well as France that “vacillated as the Nazis illegally seized the Rhineland” in 1936. (The American Secretary of State’s response was that Germany’s action did not concern the United States.) It was Britain as well as France who adopted the appeasement policy that condemned Czechoslovakia. The fact that in 1940 and 1941 Britain was compelled (in Churchill’s words) to “hold the fort alone till those who hitherto had been half blind were half ready,” is an indictment of America every bit as much as of France. In less than one month (May-June 1940), as Miller and Molesky note, 90,000 French soldiers were killed defending their country against the German invasion. This war could have been prevented, most surely by a wise American approach to Europe after the First World War. To blame it all on the follies or the cowardice of the French is incorrect and ignoble.

Miller and Molesky accept uncritically Franklin Roosevelt’s denigration of Charles de Gaulle’s statesmanship during the Second World War. More perceptive is the view of Crane Brinton (*The Americans and the French*, 1968): de Gaulle’s never failing optimism about the eventual defeat of Germany, and his related insistence that he and his following truly represented France, were “substantially and realistically correct,” and “the failure of American policymakers to recognize, admit, and act on this fact” was “one of the deepest roots of our present [1960s] difficulties with France.” Even after America stopped recognizing the Vichy regime as France, Roosevelt’s dislike and distrust of de Gaulle meant that America ended up supporting such evils as the French “Imperial Council,” which ran concentration camps in southern Algeria.

Molesky and Miller do not relent in their critique of de Gaulle as a useless pain in the backside when he was president (1959-1969). Yet they also notice that President Nixon (who admired de Gaulle, and got on well with his Gaullist successor, Georges Pompidou) pursued certain of de Gaulle’s policies: withdrawal from Vietnam, détente with the USSR. The authors’ approval of this way of reaching rapprochement

with France suggests that they think de Gaulle was right on these issues all along. They are on more solid, less contradictory ground when they conclude that France "must finally be persuaded that its long-term interests correspond with those of the United States," and that it must stop "living in denial about strategic realities

that affect [France] profoundly."

If we want the French to make wise choices on such matters, it would be better to treat them with magnanimity (which does not exclude a certain amount of righteous anger) than with indiscriminate condemnation. Expecting them to act as responsible republican citizens

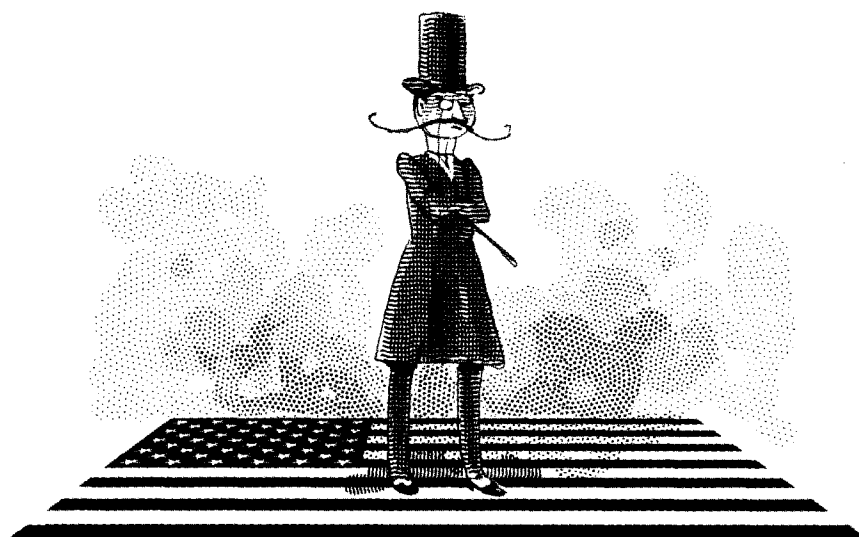
and leaders could encourage them to do so. Expecting them to behave badly may well ensure that they will.

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Book Review by Daniel J. Mahoney

ANTI-ANTI-AMERICANISM

Anti-Americanism, by Jean-François Revel, translated from the French by Diarmid Cammell.
Encounter Books, 176 pages, \$25.95 (cloth), \$16.95 (paper)



ANTI-AMERICANISM IS A UBIQUITOUS phenomenon, the closest thing in the contemporary world to a secular religion uniting intellectuals and demi-intellectuals across national boundaries and cultural frontiers. It is less a systematic ideology than a frame of mind, nurtured by deep-seated resentments against liberal capitalism and by quasi-nihilistic despair at Marxism's and other revolutionary ideologies' failure to redeem the human condition. In his timely dissection of the anti-American vulgate, the French political observer Jean-François Revel establishes the powerful continuities between the old "totalitarian temptation"—European and Third World intellectuals' attraction to Communism—and today's crude anti-Americanism, which does so much to distort representations of American society and U.S. foreign policy. In Revel's presentation, anti-Americanism is the totalitarian temptation deprived of any positive or coherent alternative to the established liberal order. It is, in important respects, a survival of the age of ideology and has inherited many of its predecessors' pathological traits.

Jean-François Revel is particularly well-suited to make sense of "The Anti-American Obsession" (the title of the original French edition of his book). He knows the United States quite well and has written about it with curiosity and sympathy since the publication of his international bestseller *Without Marx or Jesus* in 1970. In that work, he put forward the audacious claim that the United States was the world's only truly revolutionary society, a veritable laboratory for social initiatives and experiments in living. If that book displayed a rather naïve confidence in the counterculture, it nonetheless had the merit of pointing out the absurdity of identifying "progress" with bureaucratic socialist regimes that at best stifled individual initiative and at worst murdered their citizens with impunity. Revel is probably best known in the United States for *The Totalitarian Temptation* (1977) and his widely discussed 1984 polemic *How Democracies Perish*. (Contrary to legend, Revel did not predict in the latter the imminent collapse of the West. Instead, he foresaw a race in "comparative decadence" between Western societies that had increasingly lost their sense

of purpose and Communist societies that were on the verge of imploding.) These books were intelligent and honorable contributions to the literature of anti-totalitarianism during the second half of the Cold War. But they are far from exhausting Revel's intellectual production over the past forty years. During this period, Revel has written on a wide range of subjects including a controversial book on the "style" of Charles de Gaulle, incisive reflections on the Western media and on the West's victory in the Cold War, and a deservedly acclaimed memoir (*Le voleur dans la maison vide*). If Revel's writings generally lack the intellectual penetration of his now deceased friend and colleague Raymond Aron, he nonetheless has admirably continued Aron's work as a lucid, philosophically informed anti-totalitarian polemicist.

THIS IS BY NO MEANS TO SAY THAT HIS *Anti-Americanism* has been well read or adequately evaluated. Reviewers in *The New Yorker* and other liberal forums have taken him to task for being an uncritical admirer of the United States and American foreign policy. Some

have even dismissed him as a neoconservative (an epithet which in certain circles is almost a form of hate speech). Such tendentious dismissals fail to do justice to the richness and equanimity of Revel's approach. Although he clearly admires the vitality of American civilization and is second-to-none in his ability to expose misrepresentations of American life, he stops well short of glorifying contemporary America. For example, he is against the death penalty and has grave misgivings about the widespread availability of deadly weaponry throughout American society. Like many American conservatives, he lambastes the promotion of group rights and "identity" politics over traditional liberal understandings of natural rights and individual opportunity. He thinks it absurd that many Europeans should fear American "hyperpower" more than they do the murderous enemies of Western civilization. Nonetheless, he would unmistakably prefer a world where American power was less disproportionate to the power and influence of other democratic states.

While he welcomes friendly and constructive criticisms of the U.S., Revel argues that nothing is gained by the profusion of highly selective, ideologically distorted, and empirically groundless attacks on America. The anti-American obsession of European elites only "aggravate[s] the evil that it aims to extirpate." Why, Revel asks, should Americans be expected to pay attention to critics who know so little about the U.S. and whose principal aim seems to be to restrict

America's freedom of action in a dangerous world? Ideological anti-Americanism thus reinforces the unpleasant American habit, famously noted by Tocqueville, of reflexively resisting any criticism from abroad. This disposition is unworthy of a magnanimous nation that claims to act in the service of universal principles and not simply in the name of the national interest, narrowly construed.

Revel shows that the same thinkers and politicians who never understood Communism now resort to anti-Americanism to explain nearly all the world's problems. He devotes an entire chapter ("The Worst Society That Ever Was") to the misrepresentations of American history and society that dominate mainstream European discussions of the United States. It is a sad, sobering litany. As Revel demonstrates, the European Left has renewed the critique of the old European Right: America is a crude, materialistic society "entirely ruled by money." Poverty is the "dominant social reality" in America and the welfare state can barely be said to exist. Violence, criminality, and racial oppression are characteristic of a society bereft of the most elementary forms of social solidarity and civic spirit. Most European journalists and commentators are convinced that the United States is a cultural wasteland and show little awareness of the richness of America's political and literary traditions or the admirably self-critical character of American national life.

What is more, the United States is given

next to no credit for its principled and determined opposition to totalitarianism in the 20th century. Instead, European commentators love to harp on the excesses of the McCarthy era and to dismiss American anti-Communism as a fanatical and extremist ideology, far worse than the evils it set out to combat. It is tempting to suspect Revel of presenting an entertaining caricature of European (and not only European) views of America. But his book is studded with hundreds of revealing quotations from respectable newspapers, prominent politicians, and leading intellectuals that demonstrate his account's accuracy.

THE CENTERPIECE OF THE BOOK IS A devastating dissection of the anti-globalization movement. Revel shows the utter vacuity of its identification of capitalism with injustice and poverty and its assumption that economic autarky and protectionist barriers will contribute to the amelioration of poverty and the promotion of social justice. More ominously, he establishes the essentially fascist underpinnings of a movement that habitually puts "agitation before thought." And he excoriates mainstream European politicians for shamelessly indulging violent activists who despise liberal and capitalist civilization and who are more interested in destroying than humanizing the market economy.

Revel is particularly effective in exposing the economic illiteracy that informs anti-global-



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ization. Many European, particularly French, politicians remain *dirigistes* who presume that only the state can effectively promote economic progress and social justice. A purportedly *conservative* politician such as Jacques Chirac can thus readily succumb to the illusion that one can have a "normal and permanent dialogue" with those who (truth be told) do not oppose globalization per se but who wish to impose a revolutionary socialist version of it on unwilling nations and peoples.

Revel also exposes the fraudulent character of the anti-globalizers' partisanship on behalf of the Third World. Third World nations desperately need international markets to be opened to their goods and particularly for the European community and the United States to scale back agricultural subsidies to their farmers. In complete abstraction from the relevant facts, the anti-globalization crowd ferociously denounces the evil effects of free trade thereby reinforcing protectionist tendencies in the Western world. In addition, the anti-globalizers are abysmally ignorant of history and show no awareness of the strong connection between protectionism and growing international tensions in the period between the two world wars. European and Third World elites delight in excoriating "neo-liberalism" and in claiming that capitalism makes "the rich richer and the poor poorer." But Revel establishes that of all the regions in the world only Africa has gotten

poorer in recent years and almost wholly as a result of self-inflicted wounds.

THERE IS MUCH ELSE TO RECOMMEND in this lively and, on the whole, quite persuasive book. For example, Revel convincingly argues that Islamist fanaticism owes little or nothing to resentment about the effects of globalization. The effort "to ascribe rational economic and political causes" to Islamist violence is fundamentally misplaced. Islamists hate the West, in both its traditional Christian and liberal incarnations, for what it is, and are not open to dialogue addressing the problems that inevitably accompany modern civilization's development and spread. Revel suggests that they have no principled objection to globalization but simply want it to take a dictatorial, theocratic form. He also devotes several fascinating pages to the myth of Muslim moderation. In a particularly striking formulation, he avers that moderate Muslims are all too "moderate with their moderation."

For all its virtues, Revel's book is not, however, without serious limitations. Despite his admirable opposition to totalitarianism, Revel often displays a surprisingly shallow commitment to "progress." He is far too sanguine about the positive effects of genetic engineering and embryonic stem cell research and is completely silent about their drawbacks. He shows no awareness of the negative moral and politi-

cal consequences that sometimes accompany the positive economic effects of globalization. For example, he has nothing to say about the tendency of globalization to undermine patriotic attachments within modern democratic societies. As Samuel Huntington has recently observed, educated elites in the Western world increasingly mock patriotic and religious attachments and define themselves as citizens of the world.

Revel originally wrote this book for a European audience. He therefore highlights the most irresponsible expressions of anti-American sentiment, intending to expose its remarkable superficiality. But even in Revel's native France there is no shortage of intelligent and sympathetic friends of the United States who are also sometimes critical of certain aspects of American foreign policy. Unaware of these friendly critics, Revel's American readers might be tempted to enlist his thoughtful book in the service of a rival and equally thoughtless anti-European ideology, one that Revel by no means subscribes to or wishes to promote. This book is a most salutary contribution to the healing of the transatlantic divide and deserves to be received as such.

Daniel J. Mahoney is chairman of the political science department at Assumption College and the author of books on Raymond Aron, Charles de Gaulle, and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

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MACHIAVELLI AT WAR

Art of War, by Niccolò Machiavelli, translated, edited, and with a commentary by Christopher Lynch.
University of Chicago Press, 312 pages, \$25

THIRTY-SIX YEARS AGO, ALLAN BLOOM published a translation of Plato's *Republic* that set a new standard for the genre. He was by no means the first to suppose that scholars, in their guise as translators, should leave interpretation to the reader and, in their translations, track the original text as closely as possible. After all, as he was quick to point out, it was in this fashion that William of Moerbeke had made Aristotle accessible to Thomas Aquinas and to other medieval readers of Latin. Somewhere along the way, however, the example set by William had been forgotten, and many a modern translation was little more than a paraphrase propagating a particular, even idiosyncratic reading of the text.

Bloom was unusual in insisting that understanding great writers requires close reading and real thinking and that, short of learning the original language, one can gain access to these writers only by working one's way through a translation fully faithful to the original. He was not, as this brief summary may suggest, hopelessly naïve. He recognized that the ideal he projected could only more or less be achieved. He insisted only that the effort was worth it—that a translator who aimed resolutely at a literal rendering would better serve those intent on wrestling with the issues raised in the text than one who heedlessly inscribed into an English paraphrase his own interpretation of the original.

Thanks to Bloom's efforts and even more to his example, students interested in Plato, Xenophon, Machiavelli, Pierre Bayle, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Alexandre Kojève, and even Charles de Gaulle now have access to generally reliable translations of these writers' most significant works. Moreover, in many cases, the translators have followed Bloom's example in another particular, appending to their translations illuminating interpretive essays and glossaries listing terms of evident importance that appear in the translation, indicating the original for each of the words translated, and specifying precisely where in the pertinent work these words appear. In addition, to make cross-referencing easier, some have numbered the paragraphs or even the sentences of the original text. And some have added maps, figures, indices of names, and even outlines of the text's argument.

Christopher Lynch is the most recent among these, and he has done everything mentioned

above. His rendering of Machiavelli's *Art of War* is modelled on the translations of that author's *Prince*, *Florentine Histories*, and *Discourses on Livy* that Harvey Mansfield has produced on his own or with Laura Banfield or Nathan Tarcov, and it displays all, or nearly all, of the virtues found in its models as well as certain of the vices. In translating the most important of Machiavelli's terms, Lynch always, or nearly always, follows Mansfield and his collaborators. This has the great advantage that it makes it easy to read Lynch's translation of the *Art of War* alongside these other translations. One can, as a consequence, see the connections between all of these works and note the occasional disparities. It also means, of course, that when Mansfield and company go astray Lynch is likely to follow in their wake.

Thus, for example, Mansfield and Tarcov translate *risuscitato* as "resuscitated" in *Discourses on Livy* 1.58.2, illuminating the etymological connection between the Italian and the English word, but obscuring the fact that contemporaries would have recognized in Machiavelli's discussion of what would have happened at Rome had Manlius Capitolinus come back to life an oblique allusion to the resurrection of Christ; and the two do the equivalent at 2.18.5, where Machiavelli claims that "it is necessary to resurrect" the ancient orders. Lynch, in due course, follows suit in *Art of War* 5.2.247, obscuring thereby Fabrizio Colonna's treatment of his own attempt to bring back to life the "ancient orders" as somehow analogous to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Machiavelli's choice of words in these three contexts is arguably significant, as these translators acknowledge in their interpretive writings, for it is of a piece with his persistent use of charged Christian language in pagan or political contexts where this language seems, to the unsuspecting glance, decidedly odd and highly inappropriate.

In similar fashion, Mansfield, Tarcov, and Lynch translate *contado* as "country" or "countryside" and provide for the word in their glossaries no entry that would enable readers to distinguish the places where Machiavelli uses *contado* from the places where he refers to the *paese*. The distinction is of very considerable significance, for Machiavelli's Florence differed from ancient Rome and from the cities of ancient Greece in one crucial particular. In the latter, the ordinary citizen was a farmer; in the former, he was a banker, a merchant, or

a guild member. Machiavelli's fellow *cittadini* were city-dwellers involved in the professions or in high finance, engaged in manufacturing, or committed to trade. Cicero's fellow *cives* were agriculturalists. Cicero's fellow *cives* ruled over slaves; Machiavelli's fellow *cittadini* ruled over the *contadini*, the subject population of the city's *contado*, the extensive territory under its control outside its walls. Rome's army was a citizen army because, as Machiavelli puts it in a crucial passage, "Rome and the *contado* were one and the same thing" (*Discourses on Livy* 1.40.6). Machiavelli's militia—both the one that he established in his capacity as secretary of the second chancery in Florence and the one that his interlocutor, Fabrizio Colonna, advocates in the *Art of War*—was an army of subjects, an infantry made up of men drawn from the *contado*. As such, it had a revolutionary potential that made the leading citizens of Florence, in the days when Machiavelli was a civil servant, wary of his intentions and suspicious of those in the government whom he served. In his writings, Machiavelli ostentatiously sidesteps discussing the dangers of arming and training the *contadini*, thereby drawing the attention of his more observant readers to a distinction between the ancient orders and the modern ones that is profoundly important for understanding his intention. But to the extent that these translations blur the linguistic distinctions that Machiavelli observed, they obscure what he seems to have had in mind.

LYNCH SLIPS UP ELSEWHERE AS WELL. When Machiavelli describes the Roman camp, he names its principal thoroughfares *la via capitana* and *la via del croce*, which Lynch translates as "Captain Street" and "Cross Street" (4.30). Had he reflected sufficiently on that which would have arrested the attention of Machiavelli's Florentine contemporaries, he would have called the two streets "the way of the captain" and "the way of the cross." In doing so, he would have illuminated the manner in which the armed camp envisaged by the Florentine was intended to bring together the orders of ancient and Christian Rome.

This volume has additional defects. In his interpretive essay, Lynch makes much of Machiavelli's use of "sinister" to describe opinions and auguries, but in his glossary he provides no entry for the word. He makes us aware that the infantry advocated by Fabrizio Colonna is



a subject, not a citizen army, but in his glossary he neglects to provide an entry for the word "subject." In similar fashion, when Lynch makes the case that Machiavelli's Fabrizio is, despite his claims early on, "not in principle averse to a standing professional army," he neglects to provide in the appropriate place a precise reference to the passage that, in his opinion, clinches his argument (1.255-58).

These are, of course, pecadilloes all. To dwell on them would be churlish. They deserve mention in a review only because they can easily be fixed when the University of Chicago brings out a paperback edition, as surely it will. Moreover, the misjudgments that here and there afflict the translation and the glossary are salutary reminders that nothing can substitute for a knowledge of the original text. After all, like Homer, Christopher Lynch occasionally nods.

IT IS NOT OFTEN, HOWEVER, THAT HE REALLY does go astray, and, if truth be told, we are greatly in his debt. There have been four translations of Machiavelli's *Art of War* into English. Peter Whitehorne produced one such in 1560, some thirty-nine years after Machiavelli ushered the original into print. Henry Neville produced another in 1680; Ellis Farnsworth brought a third out in 1762; and Allan Gilbert published a fourth in 1965. None of these followed the original with full fidelity, and the most recent is misleading in the extreme. If in England and America political scientists and historians persist today in thinking Machiavelli an advocate for an armed citizenry, it is because Gilbert inscribed an error (first propagated by Hans Baron) into his translation, persistently referring to mercenaries as "professional soldiers" and persistently rendering as "citizen army" Machiavelli's term *ordinanza*—a word that means "ordinance" or "that which has been ordained" and which came to be used in Florence as shorthand both for the decree establishing Machiavelli's militia and for the infantry of *contadini* that for a brief span of time he conjured into existence. Now thanks to Lynch, Mansfield, and the latter's collaborators, we can finally see for ourselves that Machiavelli never advocated the establishment of a citizen army. His sole concern was the establishment of an infantry that would be both loyal and resolute, and to this end he advocated that principalities and republics arm and train selected individuals from among their subject rural populations. If, in addition, Machiavelli really was concerned with citizenship, if he favored making *cittadini* of the *contadini*, if he aimed at unleashing the revolutionary potential inherent in the countryside and at restoring "ancient orders" in this fashion, he generally kept his own counsel and confined himself to hints. On the face of it, as Lynch notes, Machiavelli's *Art of*

War points as much to the modern professional as to the modern citizen army. A civic humanist he certainly was not.

In his introduction, Lynch does a superb job of placing Machiavelli's *Art of War* in its historical context, of outlining the sources on which he drew, of surveying the debates in the secondary literature concerning its interpretation and value, and of charting its subsequent influence. He rightly places great emphasis on the setting, the *Orti Oricellari*, in which the dialogue takes place; on the background of Fabrizio Colonna and his interlocutors; and on the principal issue addressed: the relation between the military and civilian ways of life. Only sparingly in this context does he provide guidance as to how the dialogue should be read, suggesting that Fabrizio is neither a mouthpiece for Machiavelli nor a run-of-the-mill humanist whose outlook is subverted in the course of the work, but "a self-consciously restrained version of Machiavelli himself" who



is forced by the spirited young men with whom he is conversing "to remove the moral veil of wise political discourse." But, in the course of defending the work's importance, he does make a point of defending Machiavelli against those who have charged him with an indifference to and ignorance of technological innovation, especially regarding firearms, artillery, and siege warfare, and he concludes with the claim that to understand Machiavelli's *Art of War* one must attend to its author's intransigent rejection of Aristotle's claim that man is by nature a political animal and reflect on the Florentine's conviction that war is man's natural state.

In his interpretive essay, Lynch does an even better job of making sense of the book both as a contribution to the study of war and as a restatement and elaboration of the themes dominant in *The Prince* and the *Discourses on Livy*. He devotes twenty pages to Machiavelli's *Auseinandersetzung* with the military revolution underway in his own day, focusing on the revival of disciplined infantry on the ancient model by the Swiss, and then considering the advent of gunpowder technology; Machiavelli's attempt to sort out the proper combination of arms; his prescriptions

regarding manpower, organization, and training; his discussion of siege warfare; and his account of strategic doctrine. Military historians and students of strategy will find this part of Lynch's essay invaluable. Laymen interested in war will find it fascinating in the extreme.

LYNCH THEN TURNS TO THE RELATIONSHIP within Machiavelli's thinking of politics and war. He attends closely to the historical situation in which Machiavelli found himself, to his analysis of the set of circumstances that occasioned the predominance of mercenary armies within Italy, and to the role played by the Christian religion in Machiavelli's analysis of the predicament of his contemporaries. Lynch analyzes with great care the manner in which Machiavelli's protagonist, Fabrizio Colonna, flatters, then subverts the humanist sensibilities of the book's primary audience—exploiting their love of antiquity and then leading them in the direction of a proper appreciation for the primacy of military training and discipline, appealing to their love of the common good and then inducing them to appreciate the predominant role played by self-interest in motivating soldiers. This section he ends with a meditation on Machiavelli's treatment of the political problem posed by the need for a commanding officer of pre-eminent *virtù*.

In the final pages of his interpretive essay, Lynch attempts to clarify Machiavelli's overall aim—in the *Art of War* and elsewhere. Here he raises the crucial question—that of the two lives, emphasizing the unity of the military and civilian lives in antiquity; the division introduced in modern times by the Christian Church's propagation of the "sinister opinion" that the life of the priest and the monk, entirely divorced from considerations of war, is the best life; and the disastrous consequences attendant on the transformation worked thereby in the *ius gentium*. Lynch ends with a discussion of the manner in which Machiavelli sought to overcome the malignity of the times, and effect, by means of his books, a posthumous revolution in the political culture of Europe.

All in all, this is a splendid work of scholarship. The translation is excellent; the glossary is invaluable. The introduction is sound, and the interpretive essay is a model of its kind. One can admire its brevity, but one must also regret that Christopher Lynch did not go on at greater length.

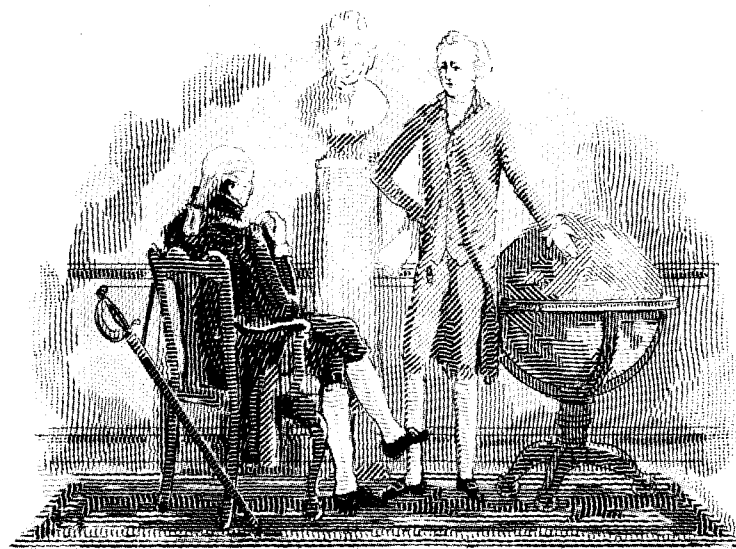
Paul A. Rahe is Jay P. Walker Professor of History at the University of Tulsa. His book *Republics Ancient and Modern: Classical Republicanism and the American Revolution* is available in a three-volume, paperback edition from the University of North Carolina Press.



Book Review by Karl Walling

OUR INTEREST GUIDED BY OUR JUSTICE

American Machiavelli: Alexander Hamilton and the Origins of U.S. Foreign Policy,
by John Lamberton Harper. Cambridge University Press, 362 pages, \$30



ALEXANDER HAMILTON IS FINALLY GETTING his due. The 200th anniversary of his death in the famous duel with Aaron Burr brought with it a major exhibit on his life and times at the New-York Historical Society; efforts to treat the Grange, his home in Harlem, with the same respect as Thomas Jefferson's Monticello; and a spate of books on his statesmanship and political thought. While Ron Chernow's biography has been getting the most attention, my vote for the best recent book on Hamilton is John Lamberton Harper's *American Machiavelli*.

Scholars of American political thought and American foreign policy have largely ignored the founders' significance for the understanding of the latter. Indeed, Harper's "partial biography" is the first book-length study of Hamilton's foreign policy since Gilbert Lycan's now dated *Alexander Hamilton and American Foreign Policy: A Design for Greatness* (1970). It may seem odd that Secretary of the Treasury Hamilton, not Secretary of State Jefferson, is usually regarded as the architect of early American foreign policy. Yet like the struggles between the State and Defense departments in our own time, inter-agency squabbling was common in Hamilton's, with Hamilton eventually winning most of the contests for Washington's ear. With a deep affinity for the American realist approach to foreign affairs, Harper, Professor of Foreign Policy and European Studies at the Johns Hopkins University Bologna Center, brings greater strategic coherence to Hamilton's foreign policy than Lycan did, and strives to prove

that American foreign policy is not hopelessly entangled in the frequently hypocritical and self-deluding moralism that he attributes to Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Woodrow Wilson, and possibly George W. Bush.

Harper associates this moralistic streak in American foreign policy with the recurring tendency of Americans to oscillate between the extremes of self-imposed isolation on the one hand, and efforts to transform the world in their image, even by force of arms, on the other. By contrast, Harper sees Hamilton as both tougher and more moderate (in foreign affairs at least) than his peers at home. In an America that continually deluded itself into thinking it could be an exception to Old World political concerns like the balance of power, Hamilton was the most vigorous spokesman for "continental realism." Ultimately, however, Harper finds the source of Hamilton's foreign policy not in Talleyrand or Pitt but in Niccolò Machiavelli.

CONCEDING THAT THERE IS SCANT evidence that Hamilton ever read Machiavelli, Harper still makes a strong case for the Florentine's indirect influence, especially through the writings of David Hume. Perhaps most compellingly, Harper demonstrates systematically that Hamilton addressed many of the same diplomatic and strategic problems that Machiavelli faced in Florence and that he described in republican Rome, with Hamilton often drawing nearly identical conclusions. The two shared many

premises, including a pessimistic view of human nature, the fickleness of human faith (and thus the unreliability of alliances), the need for a strong executive, and the self-defeating tendencies of political half-measures, i.e., playing both ends against the middle only to be crushed by the extremes.

Harper's chapters on the Nootka Sound crisis, the debate over neutrality at the beginning of the French Revolution, and the Jay Treaty capture Hamilton's prudent efforts to build the strength Americans needed for war (while avoiding war as long as possible), and merit careful study. Perhaps the best chapter is on Washington's Farewell Address, which arguably might be called Hamilton's Farewell Address. Hamilton drafted and redrafted it in accordance with his understanding of Washington's mind, the need to rescue Washington's reputation from the bitter partisanship of the 1790s, and the utility of using Washington's fame to make a lasting mark on American foreign policy.

Unfortunately, Hamilton's concern not merely with American interests but with American justice does not show up much in Harper's account. For example, when Harper writes that Hamilton endorsed the common 18th-century "scheme of natural rights" out of "a mixture of youthful conviction and deference to contemporary political correctness," one wonders why he has stripped Hamilton of any moral depth, and far worse, dismissed the fundamental principles on which the nation was founded as just another sad bout of American Puritanism. Yes, Hamilton spoke

and wrote passionately about natural rights as a sixteen-year-old revolutionary in his essays "A Full Vindication" and "The Farmer Refuted." But those rights are central to his arguments for clemency toward defeated Tories in his later *Phocion* essays, and in *The Federalist* are the ends that the American Union is meant to secure. Together with John Jay, Hamilton founded the New York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves, the kind of effort on behalf of natural rights that even Thomas Jefferson was unwilling to make, at least so long as freed slaves might live in Virginia rather than Liberia. Revolutionary France's betrayal of those rights, as Hamilton understood them, was essential to his critique of French foreign policy in his most famous essays on foreign affairs, *Pacificus* and *Americanus*. Like all of the American Founders, Hamilton without natural rights is like the United States without the Declaration of Independence, a body without a soul.

THE ROOT OF HARPER'S PROBLEM AP-
 appears to lie in his understanding of Machiavelli, a realist to be sure, but boasting a ferocity and savagery that Hamilton, along with most Americans of his generation, deeply opposed. We hear nothing in Harper's account about assassinating popes, murdering one's own, brother or child, seizing power in a *coup d'état*, keeping it through acts of state-sponsored terrorism, conquering the world, or even genocide, all of which Machiavelli seemed to advocate, according to the necessity of the times. The result is a sanitized Machiavelli, the kind a modern realist can have to dinner, without having to look at his bloody hands. Machiavelli assumed states have no choice but to molest or be molested. Thus, they must try to conquer the world, if possible, by whatever means (that is what Machiavelli meant by *virtù*), in order to be safely glorious—a view that naturally leads to a Hobbesian state of war among states as well as individuals. Throughout his political career, Hamilton stood against Machiavellian princes—like Aaron Burr—completely liberated from any political principles, and against Machiavellian republics—like France in the 1790s—preaching universal liberty but seeking universal empire. For the founders in gen-

eral and Hamilton in particular, natural rights gave a substantially different cast to their understanding of morality and interest in foreign affairs.

The principles of all the founders were much more Lockean, or more broadly speaking, Grotian, than Harper lets on, with our natural state being peace—although, absent the correct institutions and policies, that natural state can quickly devolve into a state of war. Moreover, the Lockean law of self-preservation and self-defense, with its prudent anticipation of danger at a distance, would take precedence. While advocating every prudent measure required for national security, Hamilton believed natural rights imposed duties on states to preserve the peace unless compelled to war by some fundamental interest (like securing New Orleans to preserve the American Union against France, Britain, and Spain, a view which might, in extreme circumstances, justify even preventive war). Thus Hamilton, the arch-nationalist, defended Vermont's secession from the state of New York as both an accomplished fact not worth the cost of changing and an exercise of the right of revolution Americans invoked to justify independence in 1776. Had New York gone to war to recover Vermont, as some proposed, Hamilton implied it would have sacrificed liberty to the golden calf of power and dominion. The case would have been different, however, had Vermont remained outside of the Union and allied with England. Then, Hamilton argued, saving the Union would have required war to force Vermont into the Union.

THERE IS, THEN, A DISTINCTIVE American approach to foreign affairs which, as Nathan Tarcov has argued, blends statesmanlike prudence with natural rights principles. That unique approach lies somewhere between the radical realism of Machiavelli and the radical moralism of Immanuel Kant. Sadly, while seeking to oppose Wilsonian idealism (the clearest American example of Kant's radical moralism), Harper naïvely sacrifices America's genuine natural right principles.

Readers need to be careful when Harper writes that Hamilton followed Machiavelli in learning how "not to be good," a formula that

is at the core of Machiavelli's thought but not Hamilton's. They might mistakenly associate Hamilton, despite his lifelong struggle on behalf of American principles, too much with the authentic Machiavelli traditionally understood as a "teacher of evil." Politically sober readers might turn away from Hamilton in disgust, thus depriving themselves of one of this country's sanest voices on foreign affairs. Such a result would also be unfair, because Hamilton was as much an American Hume, Smith, Locke, Blackstone, or Montesquieu—not to mention all those Greeks and Romans he used for pen names—as he was an American Machiavelli. Although politics frequently involves trade-offs not merely between interests, but also among competing moral principles, Hamilton never once said he or anyone else at any time had to learn how to do evil to serve the cause of the state, much less his own ambition. He refused to learn how not to be good. In that sense, he was actually an anti-Machiavellian.

Which is not to deny that Hamilton and his contemporaries were capable of learning a trick or two from Old Nick. A strong case can be made that Jefferson, Madison, and other founders profited much from Machiavelli's ill-gotten wisdom, either directly or indirectly. Jeffersonian vigilance, for example, has deep roots in Machiavelli's efforts to turn sheeplike citizens into wolves policing the state against tyranny with a "little rebellion now and then," and Madison's famous theory of "opposite and rival interests" (what we call pluralism today), not to mention Adam Smith's invisible hand, has an uncanny resemblance to the public benefit Machiavelli saw arising from the self-interested conflict between Roman plebs and patri- cians.

John Lamberton Harper's "partial biography" may only tell part of the story, but it does point us toward a forgotten moral and political universe, a different, philosophically richer, and perhaps better approach to foreign affairs than what is taught or practiced in America today.

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SUBJUGATION AND EXTERMINATION

Lincoln's War: The Untold Story of America's Greatest President as Commander in Chief,
by Geoffrey Perret. Random House, 496 pages, \$35

Lincoln's Constitution, by Daniel Farber.
University of Chicago Press, 256 pages, \$27.50 (cloth), \$14 (paper)



DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IS DIFFICULT under any circumstances, but never more so than in wartime. President George W. Bush confronts this reality in our war against radical Islamic terrorists. But President Bush has it easy compared to Abraham Lincoln, who, as Geoffrey Perret reminds us in *Lincoln's War*, had more or less to define the president's war power. Unlike his successors, Lincoln had no reliable precedents to guide him.

As president, Lincoln employed broad emergency powers that he argued the Constitution had vested in the executive branch. He called out the militia, authorized increases in the size of the regular army and navy, expended funds for military purchases, deployed military forces, blockaded Southern ports, suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* in certain areas, authorized arbitrary arrests, and empanelled military tribunals to try civilians in occupied or contested areas. Moreover, he took these steps without congressional authorization, although he subsequently explained his action to Congress once it convened in July 1861. Later he authorized conscription and issued the Emancipation Proclamation. All the while, Lincoln contributed to the development of Union war strategy and took the lead in finding the generals to implement it.

Surprisingly, *Lincoln's War* is the first book to examine Lincoln's overall performance as commander-in-chief (James McPherson is rumored to be at work on the topic as well). One reason for this is that the Lost Cause interpretation, which believes Lincoln's contribution to Union victory was minimal given the relative power of

the North, has long dominated Civil War historiography.

A variation of this view holds that Lincoln's main contribution to Union victory was to find the right general—Ulysses S. Grant (see, for example, Kenneth P. Williams's five-volume *Lincoln Finds a General*, and T. Harry Williams's *Lincoln and His Generals*.) But Perret, an award-winning presidential biographer and military historian, demonstrates that Lincoln went far beyond choosing generals. He skillfully managed his cabinet, his generals, and even Congress, where he had to maintain a working majority if the war was to be won. He did not hesitate to overrule his advisers, both military and civilian. And recently, historians have come to acknowledge that the Union's material advantage was not sufficient in itself to ensure victory. Lincoln still had to make the decisions that translated this advantage into military and political success.

OVERALL, PERRET DOES A FAIRLY GOOD job of telling Lincoln's story as war president. Unfortunately, however, *Lincoln's War* is deeply flawed, marred in the first place by numerous factual errors, large and small. For example, Perret has John Bell Hood commanding the Confederate Army of Tennessee during Sherman's advance on Atlanta. In fact, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston commanded that army until Atlanta was nearly taken, at which point he was relieved by Hood. Perret has the Union forces under George Thomas attacking during the battle of Franklin and destroying Hood's army. In fact, at Franklin, Hood attacked a Union force under Maj. Gen. John Schofield and was bloodily repulsed. It was at Nashville

some two weeks later that Thomas attacked and destroyed Hood's army.

These are the sort of small errors that call into question an author's judgments concerning larger issues of policy and strategy. For instance, Perret repeats the old canard that Lincoln was obsessed by the need to capture Richmond, the Confederate capital, rather than to defeat the Confederate armies. But the evidence suggests the reverse. To put it in Clausewitz's terms, Lincoln understood that the rebel armies, not territory or the Confederate capital, constituted the Confederacy's "center of gravity." To break the back of the rebellion, it was necessary to crush the rebel armies. "I think Lee's army and not Richmond, is your true objective point," Lincoln wrote in a telegraph to Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker as the Gettysburg campaign was beginning. Perret cites this, but as an anomaly; in truth, the president expressed the same sentiment on numerous occasions to his other commanders, including Henry Halleck, George McClellan, George Meade, and George Thomas. Though Lincoln had little in the way of traditional military education, he was a quick learner and possessed an intuitive grasp of the strategy needed to defeat the Confederacy, namely, the simultaneous application of military force at multiple points. In his memoirs, Grant recalled that when he outlined the strategy to Lincoln, the president replied, "Oh, yes! I see that. As we say out West, if a man can't skin he must hold a leg while somebody else does."

Perret's biggest failure, though, is his discussion of emancipation, which he never fully integrates into his narrative of political-mili-



tary strategy. The fact is Lincoln understood that emancipation was important because it struck not only at the war-making potential of the Confederacy but also at the heart of the Southern social system. However, Lincoln had to tread carefully for political reasons, because although emancipation was welcomed by abolitionists and their radical Republican allies in Congress, it was denounced by conservative Democrats in the North and loyal slaveholders in the slave states remaining in the Union. Lincoln needed both groups if he was to prosecute the war successfully.

In his magnificent *Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation*, Allen Guelzo argued persuasively that Lincoln planned to pursue a policy of legislated, gradual, compensated emancipation from the outset of his presidency. Even after the war began, Lincoln believed that he could undermine the Confederacy by getting the loyal slave states to agree to compensated emancipation. He reasoned that this step, combined with success on the battlefield, might lead to the collapse of the rebellion, which had staked its hopes on spreading to the so-called Border States.

BUT NEITHER CONDITION CAME TO PASS. The Border States rejected Lincoln's proposals for compensated emancipation, and the Army of the Potomac under Maj. Gen. George McClellan retreated from Richmond after coming close to capturing it. Lincoln concluded that something stronger and more precipitate was needed to bring the war to a successful conclusion, despite the risks of affronting the War Democrats and the Border States. The time had come, he wrote to Cuthbert Bullitt, to stop waging war "with elder-stalk squirts, charged with rose-water." Thus, after Lee's invasion of Maryland was turned back at Antietam, Lincoln issued a preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, that gave the Confederates one hundred days to submit to the Union or face the prospect of immediate emancipation.

Democrats, Southern Unionists, and loyal slaveholders charged that Lincoln was "revolutionizing" the war by issuing his proclamation. Lincoln did not disagree, admitting that once the proclamation took effect, "the character of the war will be changed. It will be one of subjugation and extermination." But, as he wrote to another correspondent, "This government cannot much longer play a game in which it stakes all, and its enemies stake nothing. Those enemies must understand that they cannot experiment for ten years trying to destroy the government, and if they fail still come back into the Union unhurt."

The stronger medicine represented by the Emancipation Proclamation was necessary because the Confederacy was then exerting its maximum effort to mobilize its population for

war. To the extent that slaves came under control of Union forces, they could be substituted for soldiers who were required to labor, freeing them up to fight. Thus emancipation had the effect of transferring labor from South to North, increasing the Union's fighting potential while decreasing that of the Confederate armies. Gideon Welles, Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy, recalled that the president called emancipation "a military necessity, absolutely essential to the preservation of the Union. We must free the slaves or be ourselves subdued. The slaves were undeniably an element of strength to those who had their service, and we must decide whether that element should be with us or against us."

Militarily, the Emancipation Proclamation opened the way to the next logical step in this process of weakening the South while strengthening the North: enrolling blacks as soldiers in the Union army. The manpower boon to the Union would be substantial. Some 180,000 black soldiers eventually served in the Union army. They constituted 120 infantry regiments, twelve regiments of heavy artillery, ten batteries of light artillery, and seven cavalry regiments. At the end of the war, they constituted 12% of the Union's military manpower.

Perret does not seem to grasp how much of a risk Lincoln took by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. It was foremost a political gamble. Those who argue that Lincoln was only "waiting for the right time" to issue it must confront the fact that because of his action, the Republicans paid an enormous price in the 1862 elections. Lincoln put the most highly charged issue of the war before the voters in the midst of the Civil War. Votes for Republicans fell by 16% from 1860. The GOP suffered disastrous setbacks in Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, New York, and New Jersey.

Emancipation also raised the specter of a military coup. Maj. Gen. George McClellan, commander of the Army of the Potomac, the Union's main army in the east, disagreed with many of Lincoln's policies, and indeed may have attempted to sabotage them. McClellan pursued the war he wanted to fight—one that would end in a negotiated peace—rather than the one his commander-in-chief wanted him to fight. The behavior of McClellan and his subordinates led Lincoln to conclude that emancipation might trigger an attempt by them to take over the government.

I have long refused to believe the charge leveled by the radical Republicans that McClellan's lack of aggressiveness was the result of a near-treasonous sympathy for the South. But now I am not so sure. There is no question that McClellan's language was often intemperate. McClellan wrote his wife that "I have commenced receiving letters from the North urging me to march on Washington & assume the Govt!!" He also wrote her about the possibility of

a "coup" after which "everything will be changed in this country so far as we are concerned & my enemies will be at my feet."

Nor did McClellan limit the expression of such sentiments to private correspondence with his wife. Lincoln and his cabinet were aware of the rumors that McClellan intended to put "his sword across the government's policy." McClellan's quartermaster-general, Montgomery Meigs, expressed concern about "officers of rank" in the Army of the Potomac who spoke openly of "a march on Washington to 'clear out those fellows.'"

Lincoln understood that he had to take action to remind the army of his constitutional role. He did so after learning that Maj. John Key, aide-de-camp to general-in-chief Henry Halleck and brother of McClellan's personal aide, had, in response to a query from a brother officer as to "why...the rebel army [was not] bagged immediately after the battle near Sharpsburg [Antietam]," replied "that is not the game. The object is that neither army shall get much advantage of the other; that both shall be kept in the field till they are exhausted, when we will make a compromise and save slavery."

Lincoln dismissed Key from the service, despite pleas for leniency (and the fact that Key's son had been killed at Perryville), writing that "it is wholly inadmissible for any gentleman holding a military commission from the United States to utter such sentiments as Major Key is...proved to have done." He remarked "that if there was a 'game' ever among Union men, to have our army not take an advantage of the enemy when it could, it was his object to break up that game." Shortly thereafter, Lincoln relieved McClellan himself.

AN ANTIDOTE TO PERRET'S UNSATISFACTORY treatment of the constitutional issues arising from the war is Daniel Farber's *Lincoln's Constitution*. As Farber, the Sho Sato Professor of Law at the University of California, Berkeley, and the McKnight Presidential Professor of Public Law at the University of Minnesota, observes, "to call the Civil War a constitutional crisis is almost a misuse of words, like calling Pearl Harbor a military setback. In the Civil War, the Constitution was placed under pressure that it had never seen before and has not seen since.... [T]he Civil War experience illuminates the deepest, most critical constitutional issues," including the "nature of the Union and the states, the breadth of the president's independent power to pursue the national interest, the scope of civil liberties during national emergencies, and the collision between the imperatives of national survival and the rule of law."

The first half of *Lincoln's Constitution* deals with the rights and wrongs of secession, a subject that Perret does not treat at all. Looking back

to James Madison and earlier debates about the relationship between the states and the Union, Farber vindicates Lincoln's theory of the Union: there was no constitutional right to secession.

Of course, the most controversial element of Lincoln's war presidency is his treatment of civil liberties. Even many defenders of Lincoln argue that he overstepped constitutional bounds by declaring martial law, arbitrarily arresting civilians and trying them by military tribunal, and shutting down opposition newspapers. After the war, the Supreme Court criticized many of these measures in *Ex parte Milligan*.

Farber rejects this view. Indeed, he is sympathetic to Lincoln's response to some War Democrats in 1863. In a letter to Erastus Corning, Lincoln observed that the Constitution is a remarkable document, but it is not the same document during war that it is during peace.

I can no more be persuaded that the Government can constitutionally take no strong measures in time of rebellion, because it can be shown that the same could not lawfully be taken in time of peace, than I can be persuaded that a particular drug is not good medicine for a sick man, because it can be shown not to be good for a well one. Nor am I able to appreciate the danger apprehended by the meeting [of the New York Democrats] that the American people

will, by means of military arrest during the Rebellion, lose the right of Public Discussion, the Liberty of Speech and the Press, the Law of Evidence, Trial by Jury, and Habeas Corpus, throughout the indefinite peaceful future, which I trust lies before them, any more than I am able to believe that a man could contract so strong an appetite for emetics during temporary illness as to persist in feeding upon them during the remainder of his healthful life.

WHAT CAN WE CONCLUDE ABOUT Abraham Lincoln as a war president? First and foremost, that he saved the Union. It is hard to imagine that anyone else among his contemporaries could have done what he did. Many were willing to let the Union go to pieces. Who knows how many "confederacies" there would now be on the North American continent had the view of James Buchanan or the Peace Democrats prevailed? Who knows when slavery would have ended? Who knows what would have become of a world without a United States to oppose both the Nazis and the Communists?

Many others, spurred by the fiery purity of the abolitionists, would have pursued policies that lacked any element of consent. As Lincoln remarked on numerous occasions, public sentiment is critically important in a republic. In the

absence of public sentiment, legislators cannot pass laws and presidents cannot execute them. Lincoln could have avoided war by making another of the base concessions that politicians had been making for several decades. But that would only have postponed the day of decision, making it unlikely that republican government could survive in North America; and insofar as the United States was the "last, best hope of earth," making it unlikely that republican government could survive *anywhere*.

Lincoln set a high standard for leadership in time of war. He called forth the resources of the nation, he appointed the agents of victory, both civilian and military, he set the strategy, he took the necessary steps to restrain those who would cooperate with the disunionists, and he provided a rhetoric that stirred the people. Yet he did these things within a constitutional framework.

At a time when the United States once again faces an adversary intent on nothing less than its destruction, President Bush may correctly take his bearings from Lincoln, whose war presidency teaches us how much may be required of the statesman whose duty is "to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."

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Book Review by Thomas A. Bruscino, Jr.

CULTURES OF WAR

Battle: A History of Combat and Culture,

by John A. Lynn. Westview Press, 399 pages, \$27.50 (cloth), \$16.95 (paper)

Ripples of Battle: How Wars of the Past Still Determine How We Fight, How We Live, and How We Think,

by Victor Davis Hanson. Doubleday, 278 pages, \$27.50 (cloth), \$14.95 (paper)

OVER THE PAST TWENTY YEARS, Victor Davis Hanson, a one-time raisin farmer and now a fellow at the Hoover Institution, has become one of the world's most prominent military historians. Hanson's bestselling books and opinion pieces on culture, warfare, and foreign affairs have become so influential that in the aftermath of September 11, he receives consultation calls from the White House and Pentagon.

Not surprisingly, his high profile has brought criticism, ranging from the shrill—in the mid-1990s one critic asserted that he could

be the Unabomber—to the professional. *Battle*, by University of Illinois professor of history John Lynn, belongs in the latter category.

Battle is an eclectic study of world military history, tackling a wide array of subjects, from virtue and ethics in ancient Chinese and Indian conflicts to the war on terror. Lynn brings a fresh cultural perspective to a number of long-standing historical arguments. He describes the brutality of medieval Western warfare, dominated not by chivalry in battle but by rape, pillage, and murder in the *chevauchée*, the great raids across the countryside. To

those who find unchanging truth in the work of Prussian strategist Carl von Clausewitz, Lynn charges that Clausewitz must be understood as a creature of his cultural times. Before World War I, military thinkers studied the Prussian's principles of decisive battle; after World War II, they looked with equal fervor to his ideas on limited war. And contrary to the prevailing wisdom that the strategy and brutality of World War II in the Pacific stemmed from race hatred on both sides, Lynn wisely maintains that geography dictated the strategy and conflicting military cultures created the brutality.

Lynn shows that culture can also be an obstacle to battlefield success, using the Egyptian army from 1948 to 1973 as an example. The Egyptians' rigid, top-heavy command structure stifled fresh ideas, tactical flexibility, and honest communication from lower levels, leading to a drubbing by the Israelis in the Six-Day War. In the Yom Kippur War (1973), their preplanned attack—scripted down to the individual soldier—negated any advantage they might have had in surprise and personal initiative; even adjusting for their culture did not lead to ultimate victory. This brings us to our present situation in the Middle East. If you can't beat an enemy on the battlefield, you have two options: you go up, to weapons of mass destruction, or down, to terrorism.

Prof. Lynn makes a persuasive case for culture as a driving force in world history in this iconoclastic and learned study. Nevertheless, *Battle* will disappoint readers who long for broad conclusions and sweeping historical themes. To Lynn, complexity and discontinuity separate history's many ways of war.

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON BEGINS *Ripples of Battle* with a personal narrative, describing the death of his father's cousin, and his namesake, in the battle for Okinawa in 1945. This death on a distant island almost sixty years ago has rippled through the Hanson family ever since. The killing and destruction of war, Hanson argues, ripples through human history in much the same way. "Battles," he writes, "are really the wildfires of history, out of which the survivors float like embers and then land to burn far beyond the original conflagration."

Hanson examines three battles—Okinawa, Shiloh, and Delium—describing how, in a matter of a few hours or days of fighting, they precipitated changes across entire societies. In the bloody Battle of Shiloh in 1862, Ulysses S. Grant's federal forces barely overcame a surprise rebel attack. A previously disgraced William T. Sherman played a key role in the federal stand, a role that rescued him from despair and obscurity. Shiloh launched him on a course that would end in his decisive march through the heart of the South. His capture of Atlanta two years later saved Lincoln's presidential election, and his partnership with Grant eventually won the war.

On the other side, the fluke death of Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston on the evening of the first day at Shiloh prevented any further rebel attacks on the wavering federal lines. Whether or not Johnston's survival would have turned the tide is irrelevant; the fact is that many Southerners did and do believe that to be the case. Chance, not the

skill of the enemy, destroyed the Confederate cause. This myth would be cemented by the death of Stonewall Jackson and by the missed opportunities at Gettysburg.

Yet the effects of Shiloh pale in comparison to the Battle of Delium in 424 B.C., an obscure and strategically unimportant engagement in the Peloponnesian War that changed the course of Western civilization. In the midst of devastating war, the Athenians decided to turn and defeat Sparta's Boeotian allies to the north. Of the thousands of hoplites who took their place in the Athenian line, one was a middle-aged philosopher named Socrates. After being routed by the Boeotians, the Athenians fled in three directions. While others fled to the mountains or their fortress, Socrates headed for the woods; only those who chose the woods escaped slaughter. And so the father of Western political philosophy lived to pass on his wisdom to Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, and us.



A KEY IDEA SEPARATES VICTOR DAVIS Hanson and John Lynn. Hanson's work has championed a "Western way of war." For Hanson, Greek agrarian culture produced a war method based on civic militarism and decisive battle, and the West has more or less been fighting that way (and winning against the non-West) ever since. Western traditions like consensual government, secular rationalism, and individual ingenuity produced an unparalleled, lethal military dynamism. The Greeks and Macedonians defeated the mighty Persian empire; Rome, not Carthage, conquered the known world; Spanish conquistadors ran wild in Latin America; and gunpowder, a toy for the Chinese elite, became in Western hands the basis for repeating rifles and explosive shells—not due to superior numbers, higher IQs, guns, germs, or steel, but to a 2,500-year cultural tradition. The success of the Western way of war explains why "the rest of the world copies its weapons, uni-

forms, and military organization from us, not vice versa."

Lynn disagrees. He criticizes Hanson's Western way of war for creating a universal Western warrior, unchanged through time. Lynn maintains that the soldiers and fighting styles from Imperial Rome through the Early Modern period drastically departed from their Greek antecedents, rupturing Hanson's supposedly unbroken tradition. Besides, it is not as if the West has been universally successful against the rest of the world. The Huns, Muslims, Mongols, and Turks each held their own or had their way with Western armies.

But Hanson's gift is to summon history in ways meaningful to the present. Whereas John Lynn sees coincidence in the emergence of civic militarism combined with decisive battle, Hanson sees a pattern encoded in the West's culture. Lynn saw terrorists crashing planes into buildings as marking the emergence of a new type of warfare. Hanson does not. In late 1944, the Japanese began kamikaze and banzai attacks against U.S. fleets in the Pacific. They were attempting to frighten the U.S. out of invading the mainland, which would potentially lead to millions of deaths. It was this that persuaded U.S. military planners to drop the atomic bomb. "There was a similar chain of events," Hanson writes, "after the terrible autumn of 2001." Again, the U.S. found itself faced by thousands of suicidal ideologues, convinced their fearlessness would overcome the decadent U.S. Hanson observes, "Romantics may have remembered the kamikazes; realists recalled how they were dealt with.... Okinawa taught the world that the chief horror of war is not the random use of suicide bombers, but the response that they incur from Western powers whose self-imposed restraint upon their ingenuity for killing usually rests only with their own sense of moral reluctance—a brake that suicidal attack seems to strip away entirely."

Ideas are tricky things, difficult to track and measure through time. *Ripples of Battle* demonstrates the lasting and unexpected influence that warfare can have on all aspects of culture. If there is a Western way of war, its path from the Greek hoplite to the American soldier remains at least partially obscured by history's mountains and valleys; hidden among the ideas, prayers, art, and actions of countless souls. John Lynn is right to point this out, because discovering such a path is the essence of the historian's work. But as Victor Davis Hanson so clearly understands, in an uncertain world, history can also tell us who we are and for what, if necessary, we fight.

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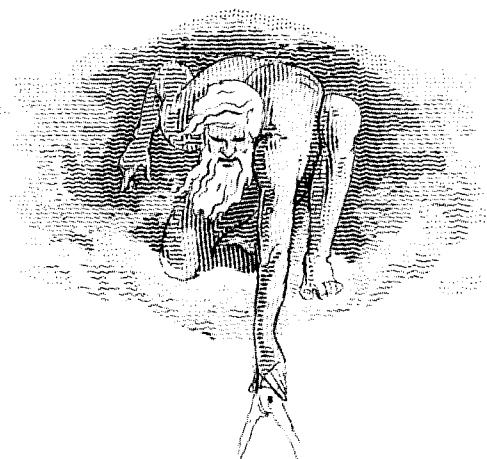
IS GOD IN THE DETAILS?

Modern Physics and Ancient Faith, by Stephen M. Barr.
University of Notre Dame Press, 312 pages, \$30

The Design Revolution: Answering the Toughest Questions about Intelligent Design,
by William A. Dembski. InterVarsity Press, 334 pages, \$22 (cloth), \$16 (paper)

By Design: Science and the Search for God, by Larry Witham.
Encounter Books, 236 pages, \$24.95 (cloth), \$16.95 (paper)

Doubts about Darwin: A History of Intelligent Design, by Thomas Woodward.
Baker Books, 320 pages, \$19.99 (cloth), \$16.99 (paper)



DO THE MARVELS OF THE NATURAL world, especially the great variety and complexity of living things, manifest the design of an intelligent being or merely the operation of unguided physical processes, of matter in motion following universal laws of nature? What light, if any, does modern natural science shed on this question?

In *Modern Physics and Ancient Faith*, physicist Stephen M. Barr appeals on this point to Steven Weinberg, “the leading particle physicist of our time,” and biologist and arch-Darwinist Richard Dawkins. According to Weinberg, humans want to believe “that we have some special relationship to the universe, that human life is not just a farcical outcome of a chain of accidents, . . . but that we were somehow built in from the beginning. . . . It is very hard for us to realize that [the entire Earth] is just a tiny part of an overwhelmingly hostile universe. . . . The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it also seems pointless.” Dawkins, reflecting on Darwin’s great discovery of natural selection, concludes that “[t]he universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is at bottom no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference.” As Dawkins famously asserted in his book *The Blind Watchmaker* (1986), “Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.”

Against this brand of scientific materialism stands an increasingly influential, if small, band

of scientists, mathematicians, and philosophers who maintain that the facts of nature, as revealed by modern science, provide compelling evidence that an intelligence was responsible for the design of the physical and/or biological world. Although “intelligent design,” according to William Dembski of Baylor University, remains “an academic pariah,” it has made its way into the nation’s leading newspapers and magazines and, more controversially, into debates and decisions on teaching evolution in the public schools.

Larry Witham’s *By Design* and Thomas Woodward’s *Doubts about Darwin* are highly readable histories of the intelligent design movement, excellent points of departure for those who want to learn what the controversy is all about. Witham’s is a broad survey of the dialogue between modern science and religion and especially of developments within modern science that lead many to ask whether “nature point[s] to something beyond itself—toward a God, perhaps, or a transcendent order.” Woodward’s is a more narrowly focused “rhetorical history” of that aspect of the intelligent design movement that specifically challenges the adequacy of evolutionary theory and Darwinian materialism to account for biological diversity in general and man in particular. Whereas *Doubts about Darwin* focuses almost entirely on biology, *By Design* also includes substantial treatments of recent developments in cosmology, astronomy, physics, and the scientific attempt to under-

stand and explain human consciousness.

FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT SCIENCE by its very nature must posit the absence of an intelligent designer, and therefore that science and theism are necessarily at odds, Stephen Barr provides a helpful catalogue, dating back to the 12th century, of “important scientific figures who were themselves monks, priests, and even bishops.” Moreover, “many of the great founders of modern science, including Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Ampere, Maxwell, and Kelvin, were deeply religious men.” And in *The Design Revolution*, William Dembski notes that “intelligent design figures substantively in Newton’s *Principia*—see, for example, his General Scholium,” where Newton holds that “[t]his most beautiful system of sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being.” And later, “All that diversity of natural things which we find suited to different times and places could arise from nothing but the ideas and will of a Being necessarily existing. . . . to discourse of whom from the appearance of things, does certainly belong to Natural Philosophy.” Even now, many scientists are believers. Barr notes a “recent survey which showed that roughly half of American scientists believe in a personal God who answers prayers.”

Although the views of many contemporary physicists and astronomers lie closer to



Weinberg's atheism than to Newton's theism, it is much less controversial for physical scientists to discuss the relationship of their science to belief in God (more below) than it is for biologists and life scientists generally. Consider, for example, the attack on the biological case for intelligent design in a recent book-length critique published by Oxford University Press: Intelligent design makes "lousy argument[s]" discredited long ago by David Hume. It is guilty of "[s]ophistry" and "lazy science." Its advocates, who are allied with "the dark powers of ignorance and regression" are "coming close to subverting the schooling of young Americans." It is "pernicious nonsense which needs to be neutralized before irreparable damage is done to American education." Intelligent design is "an important fragment of a much larger rejection [of the ideals] . . . upon which the United States was founded" and is the "chief weapon" used by "religious extremists who hope to turn the clock of science back to medieval times." This "stealth creationism" has as its "ultimate aim" the establishment of "a fundamentalist Christian theocracy" that would impose "discriminatory, conservative Christian values on our educational, legal, social, and political institutions" (Richard Dawkins and Niall Shanks in *God, the Devil, and Darwin*, 2004).

This is not a fringe view. Apparently, thousands of mainstream scientists have been persuaded that intelligent design threatens to destroy science, corrupt our youth, and undermine our freedoms. It is little wonder that it is extraordinarily risky for a biologist or other life scientist to question Darwinian theory or to research the issue of design in nature. "Doubting Darwinian orthodoxy," writes Dembski, "is comparable to opposing the party line of a Stalinist regime." Not surprisingly, the leading peer-reviewed journals, keepers of the orthodoxy, are walled off from intelligent design. Moreover, scientists "outed" as advocates of—or even associated with—intelligent design suffer professional ostracism, or worse. As Dembski ruefully concludes, "Welcome to the inquisition." (Since Dembski's book appeared, intelligent design made a small breach in the Darwinian fortifications when a peer-reviewed journal published by the Smithsonian Institution carried an article in September 2004, by design theorist Stephen Meyer. This very fact caused widespread controversy in the scientific community.)

DEMBSKI, WHO HOLDS PH.D.S IN MATHEMATICS and philosophy and a masters in theology, is intelligent design's leading theorist. His highly influential, though dauntingly technical, first book, *The Design Inference* (1998), laid the mathematical and logical foundations of a methodology, called

the "explanatory filter," for distinguishing design from necessity (the inexorable operation of physical laws) and chance. He followed this with two books more accessible to a broad audience: *Intelligent Design: The Bridge between Science and Theology* (1999) and *No Free Lunch: Why Specified Complexity Cannot Be Purchased Without Intelligence* (2002). His current work, *The Design Revolution*, is a collection of forty-four short chapters that introduce the reader to the subject and provide "supporters of intelligent design the tools they need to counter the attacks by critics of intelligent design."

Dembski describes a scientific movement that, perhaps paradoxically, makes claims that are both revolutionary and, on the largest philosophical-theological issues, quite modest. On the one hand, intelligent design is nothing less than "a full-scale scientific revolution" that, if successful, will overthrow naturalism and materialism. On the other hand, it is a technical scientific enterprise that takes no direction from theology or Biblical texts—"a strictly scientific theory devoid of religious commitments"—and that seeks to identify design in nature without saying anything about the nature of the designer, except that it exhibits intelligence: "the nature, moral character and purposes of this intelligence lie beyond the competence of science and must be left to religion and philosophy." Thus the designer in intelligent design theory is compatible not only with the God of the Judeo-Christian tradition but also with "the watchmaker-God of the deists, the Demiurge of Plato's *Timaeus* and the divine reason . . . of the ancient Stoics." And later, "This intelligence could be E.T. or a telic principle immanent in nature or a transcendent personal agent."

Perhaps Dembski's strongest argument for the scientific legitimacy of his enterprise is his claim that many fields of science regularly deal with the problem of identifying design. The archeologist determines whether objects discovered in a dig, which might appear to be tools, were in fact designed by humans. The cryptographer uses his training and skills to distinguish a coded message from a randomly generated string of numbers or letters. The medical examiner, upon investigating a death, concludes whether the cause was natural, accidental, or intentional (i.e., the result of human design).

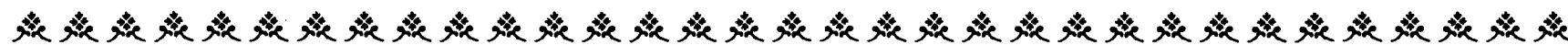
It is not only scientists who must learn to distinguish design from chance. Dembski tells the story of Nicholas Caputo, a New Jersey county election commissioner, who was charged by law with determining by chance whether the Democratic or Republican parties should head the ballot (the preferred position). Strikingly, and quite suspiciously, Caputo's Democratic Party achieved the top position forty out of forty-one times over several decades. Although the New Jersey Supreme Court did not formally ac-

cuse Caputo of wrongdoing, it recognized that such a string of "coincidences" could undermine public confidence and it suggested changes in the way the drawings were held.

The paradigmatic example of science identifying design, used by Dembski in many of his writings, is SETI, the search for extraterrestrial intelligence. As depicted in the popular movie *Contact*, scientists received a radio signal from space that included a string of the prime numbers. Given that there is no known natural mechanism that could account for this, the scientists concluded that some intelligence was responsible for the signal. Although they knew nothing about the nature of that intelligence, this didn't shake their confidence that intelligent design was the cause of the radio signal. The entire SETI enterprise rests on the possibility, at least in principle, of distinguishing design from the vast sea of noise that arrives at radio telescopes on earth.

Dembski holds that just as radio signals may manifest intelligent design, so may biological systems. In recent years Lehigh University microchemist Michael Behe, to whom Dembski devotes a chapter, pursued this contention. Behe's bestselling *Darwin's Black Box* (1999) showed that numerous biomolecular systems exhibit a characteristic he calls "irreducible complexity": a variety of distinct well-matched parts work together to perform some function, but remove one part and the function ceases. Behe's most famous example is the bacterial flagellum, in effect a rotary motor of "staggering complexity" that some bacteria use for propulsion. Like an automobile engine, take one part away and the motor will not work. This poses a particular problem for evolutionary theory because it is difficult (impossible?) to see how a succession of small changes caused by random mutations, each of which must be functional to be preserved, could build a complex molecular machine. What does the scientific literature say about the evolution of irreducibly complex molecular systems? According to Behe, nothing at all.

Dembski's own contribution to this debate, which emerged from his studies in mathematics and philosophy, is the concept of "specified complexity," of which "irreducible complexity" is a type. Unlikely events happen all the time. Flip a fair coin a thousand times and the particular sequence of heads and tails that results surprises no one, despite its extraordinary improbability. But flip a coin a thousand times and get all heads—and the conclusion is inescapable that this is not a random process. Similarly, no particular deal of 52 cards in a game of bridge usually surprises us unless, say, one player gets all Hearts, another all Spades, the third all Clubs, and the last all the Diamonds. This is so improbable that no player in such a game



would believe that it resulted from a fair deal. Dembski shows that the key to inferring design is the existence of an independent pattern, or specification, that matches the data. Hence the concept of "specified complexity," also called "complex specified information."

This led to the elaboration of Dembski's now well-known "explanatory filter," which can be explained briefly. First, one asks whether a phenomenon is contingent or not. If not, then one attributes it to *necessity* (or law of nature). Second, if it is contingent—if it could have been otherwise—is it also complex (or improbable)? If not, it may be attributed to *chance*. Third, if it is both contingent and complex, does it conform to a specified pattern? If not, it may also be attributed to *chance*. Finally, if contingent, complex, and conforming to an independent pattern, it must be attributed to *design*. Throughout *The Design Revolution* Dembski devotes considerable attention to critiques of the "explanatory filter" and of his broader claim that "detecting design is a perfectly ordinary, rational activity."

Somewhat less controversially, physicists in recent decades have been making their own independent contribution to the design argument. In particular, many have been struck by the increasing evidence of the "fine tuning" of the universe: that dozens of features of the laws of physics seem to be exactly what is required for the known universe, both physical and biological, to exist.

STEPHEN BARR, A PHYSICIST AT Bartol Research Institute, University of Delaware, identifies and describes eleven such features, by no means an exhaustive list. The first of these is the "strong nuclear force," which holds atomic nuclei together. If this force were just 10% weaker, no elements but hydrogen would have formed. If it were just 4% stronger, stars would have burned up much too quickly for life to evolve. Similarly, if the mass of the neutron were not slightly greater than the mass of the proton, even hydrogen would not have formed and therefore none of the other elements either. What's more, the strength of the electromagnetic force, about one-hundredth of that of the strong nuclear force, is just what is required for the existence of about one hundred naturally occurring elements vital to earthly life. What are the odds, ask these physicists, that dozens of physical constants and other features of the laws of physics would be precisely what they must be to produce a universe with life as we know it? The theistic implications of the question are obvious.

To avoid these implications, materialists make four points. First, notes Witham, quoting "arch-atheist" Bertrand Russell, "The universe is just there, and that's all." Or as Niall Shanks, in *God, the Devil, and Darwin*, recently

argued, "it was just a matter of luck." This is, of course, another way of saying, "We have no idea why things are the way they are." Is this science or surrender?

Second, some argue that when we finally discover the deep underlying mathematical structure of the universe, we will learn that all these constants and features of the laws of physics must be as they are. Yet as Barr retorts, "The simple and absolutely undeniable fact is that the universe did not have to have the particular laws it does have by any sort of logical or mathematical necessity. In other words, God had a choice—in fact, an infinite number of choices."

Third, critics of the design argument offer the "anthropic principle," which states that we should not be surprised if the world in which we live seems particularly hospitable to life since if it were not, we would not be here to note the fact. Witham explains philosopher John Leslie's trenchant response:

He imagines himself tied to a post, awaiting his execution by firing squad. When the fifty sharpshooters all miss, to say to oneself, 'If they hadn't all missed then I would not be considering the affair' is not an adequate response; in other words, someone in that situation is required to be truly surprised that he is still alive. The analogy here is with human beings finding themselves alive in the universe: in their surprise, they are required to ask whether this outcome was designed or just the stochastic result of infinitely many possibilities.

The odds that fifty sharpshooters would all miss their target at the same time, or that dozens of physical constants would have precisely the values necessary to sustain life, are so infinitesimally small that some explanation is required.

In the end, the only real explanation that is offered—if it can be called an explanation—is that ours is but one of an infinite number of universes in which the constants and laws of physics take on all possible values. We happen to inhabit the universe where everything worked out just right. Although Barr's critique of the various versions of the multiple universe argument is too complicated to reproduce here, his conclusion nicely identifies the leap of faith demanded by materialists: "It is a very curious circumstance that materialists, in an effort to avoid what Laplace called the unnecessary hypothesis of God, are frequently driven to hypothesize the existence of an infinity of unobservable entities.... It seems that to abolish one unobservable God, it takes an infinite number of unobservable substitutes."

This argument about "fine tuning" or "anthropic coincidences" is but one part of Barr's more comprehensive account of how the discoveries of modern science have "damaged the credibility of materialism" and supported "the central claims of religion." One of these discoveries was "that the universe began in an explosion that took place about 15 billion years ago." Developed by astronomers in the early-to-mid-20th century and confirmed in the 1960s by measurements of the background radiation of space, the Big Bang theory was stoutly resisted by Einstein and other prominent scientists because it pointed to creation and thus to a creator. A characteristic reaction was the 1931 comment by Arthur Eddington, one of the leading astrophysicists of his era: "The notion of a beginning is repugnant to me.... I simply do not believe that the present order of things started off with a bang... the expanding Universe is preposterous... incredible... it leaves me cold."

BARR ALSO CHALLENGES THE ATHEISTS' argument that "order can spring forth 'spontaneously' and 'necessarily' from disorder by unconscious laws rather than by intelligent design." To the contrary, Barr maintains, order emerges not out of chaos but out of a deeper order "already implicit in the nature of things, although often in a secret or hidden way." Here he describes in some detail the order and symmetry built into nature at the most fundamental levels: "science has given us new eyes that allow us to see down to the deeper roots of the world's structure, and there *all* we see is order and symmetry of pristine mathematical purity." "[O]ne must ask," he continues, "where this design comes from. Can science explain it? That is not possible.... [S]cience really has no alternative to offer to the Argument from Design."

Finally, Barr devotes the last third of his book to the question, "What is Man?" focusing on whether "the human faculties of intellect and free will [can] be understood in purely physical and mechanical terms." After succinctly summarizing key arguments against the reduction of human consciousness to deterministic natural laws, he addresses at some length the relevance of "two profound and epoch-making discoveries... [that] strengthen the case against the materialistic view."

One is Austrian mathematician and logician Kurt Gödel's Incompleteness Theorem (1931), especially as later interpreted by philosopher John Lucas and, more recently, by mathematician and physicist Roger Penrose. Gödel showed that in any formal mathematical system there are statements that cannot be proven using the rules of that system but which can be known to be true. Lucas and then Penrose attempted to show how Gödel's theorem demonstrated that

the human mind is not merely a computer, or, as Barr explains, that the power to understand cannot be reduced to mere computation, or to rules governing the firing of neurons in the brain. Barr notes, however, that this interpretation of Gödel's theorem is far from universally accepted.

The second "epoch-making" discovery is quantum theory, which provides a ground for free will by overthrowing determinism. Barr's point is not that "quantum indeterminism explains free will, but rather that it provides an opening for free will." Some will wonder, however, whether the form and content of physical laws matter here at all, if human consciousness, understanding, and will are not in the end reducible to matter in motion. Yet Barr

goes even further to explicate the arguments of several leading physicists and mathematicians to the effect that quantum theory by its very nature is incompatible with a thoroughgoing materialism, that it "requires that the intellect of the observer lies to some extent beyond the possibility of physical/mathematical description." As Nobel Prize-winning physicist Eugene Wigner wrote about quantum theory, "it will remain remarkable... that the very study of the external world led to the conclusion that the content of the consciousness is an ultimate reality."

The debate as to whether nature provides evidence of design and purpose is now over two millennia old. That debate took a decisive turn in the 17th century when Francis Bacon

and others successfully argued for the exclusion of Aristotle's formal and final causes from the study of nature. The irony, as these four fine books demonstrate, is that the science of material and efficient causes now increasingly points to formal and final causes, or design, in the very foundations of the physical and biological world. It is because the implications of these discoveries are so profound that the issue is so intensely controversial.

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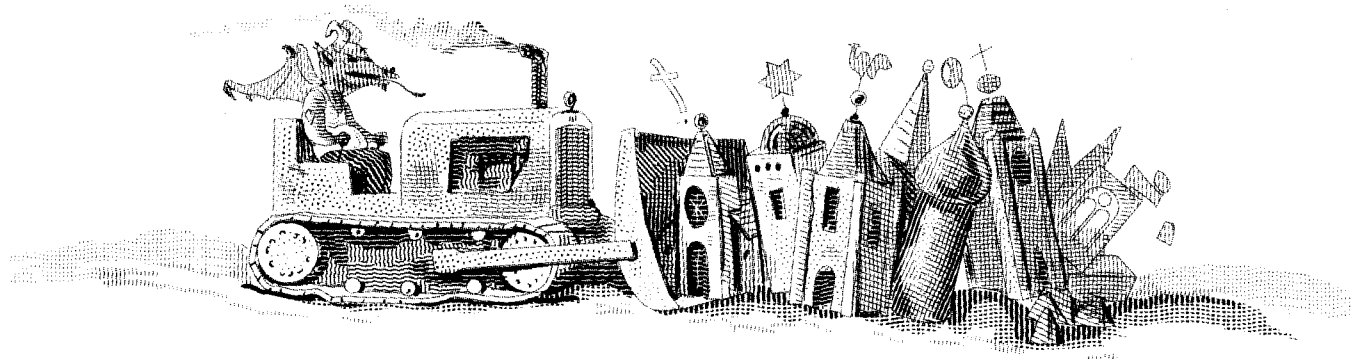
Book Review by Christopher D. Levenick

SLOUCHING TOWARDS PLURALISM

The Transformation of American Religion: How We Actually Live our Faith,
by Alan Wolfe. Free Press, 304 pages, \$26 (cloth), \$16 (paper)

Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal, by William R. Hutchison.
Yale University Press, 276 pages, \$32.50 (cloth), \$18 (paper)

Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited, by Charles Taylor.
Harvard University Press, 142 pages, \$12 (paper)



THOSE WHO STUDY ORGANIZED RELIGION, like those who study macroeconomics, often find that the most straightforward questions require the most complicated answers. When asked about the Big Picture, specialists in either field must grapple with seemingly innumerable variables. Inevitably some organizations will appear to be profiting, others perishing; some sectors flourishing, others floundering; some overall trends encouraging, others dispiriting. Any attempt to connect the countless individual transactions with a bit of explanatory tissue will immediately

be challenged from all sides. Amid so much flux, it takes a brave soul to claim to see some order.

Enter Alan Wolfe, whose *The Transformation of American Religion* intends to survey the religious landscape of modern America. Wolfe, a distinguished sociologist of religion at Boston College, is superlatively qualified for such an undertaking. His detailed mastery of the topic is evident on every page: he has attended worship services throughout the country, conducted scores of interviews and surveys, and immersed himself in the massive secondary literature. And, on the basis of this extensive research, he

concludes that "in every aspect of the religious life, American faith has met American culture—and American culture has triumphed."

In Wolfe's view, if the faithful once stood as a people set apart, they "are so no longer." Whenever contemporary mores conflict with ancient practices, the latter invariably give way to the former. Rituals and doctrine, when heeded at all, are constantly revised to accommodate modern sensibilities; whatever one thinks of, say, the invention of the *bat mitzvah* or the installation of an openly homosexual Episcopal bishop, it is all but impossible to legitimate these in-



novations by invoking the sanctity of tradition. Theological rigor in both pulpit and pew has likewise declined significantly, and the moral vocabulary of wickedness and sin has been replaced by a therapeutic idiom of sickness and recovery. Liturgical music aspires to be lite rock, and ministers often sound more like Oprah than Obadiah. "Religion," Wolfe concludes, "increasingly tell[s] Americans what they already want to hear."

An approachable and engaging writer, Wolfe has an artist's eye for the telling detail: the super-sized cup holders in the theater seating of the exurban megachurch, or the Christian graffiti adorning the inner-city mission, or the studiously non-judgmental platitudes exchanged at a divinity school seminar. But despite this exquisite brushwork, the larger portrait seems a bit off; the whole is somewhat less than the sum of its parts.

The basic problem can be traced to the book's overarching purpose. According to Wolfe, the culture wars result from a catastrophic misunderstanding; neither believers nor those suspicious of believers appreciate American religion for what it really is. The faithful needlessly hesitate to admit the extent to which their religion has accommodated itself to modern life, while staunch secularists promote a caricature of religion that tends to discriminate against those who make faith central to their lives. The reality, Wolfe proposes, is that American religion draws so deeply from the wider culture as to relieve any possible tension between the two. Once "we begin to recognize religion as it really is," we will be "less likely to see ourselves divided into implacable camps."

Wolfe's analysis of the culture wars is certainly open to dispute, but, even conceding his position, it does not follow that the misunderstanding he describes is symmetric: secularists by and large have a more distorted view of religious believers than vice versa. Why? Because secularists are disproportionately situated in the organs of culture—the entertainment business, the major media, and the academy. Believers are therefore exposed to the thinking of secularists, while secularists lack similar exposure to believers. You can catch *Sex and the City* most anywhere in rural Arkansas, but try to find a Pentecostal church on the Upper West Side.

This imbalance manifests itself in an even more fundamental way in Wolfe's book. As Wolfe himself candidly admits, he is not religious. Despite his indisputable expertise and undeniable sympathy, Wolfe ultimately cannot relate to the experience he describes.

That disconnect affects the book in ways both big and little. One example may be found in his treatment of fundamentalists who will open the scriptures at random, seeking a blind-

ing flash of insight from the first passage they read. He chides such believers for playing "Bible roulette," a staggeringly simplistic exercise that treats the Bible as "something of an afterthought." And, truth be told, within the ambit of reason alone, Wolfe is absolutely right.

But a believer may well regard the practice differently. It might evoke memories of St. Augustine, sitting in a Milanese garden, racked with sobs, when he heard distant voices softly chanting: *tolle, lege* (take up, read). He immediately seized Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and in silence read the first passage on which his eyes fell. In that moment, he would later write, light flooded his heart and all the darkness of doubt was dispelled. Now, this is certainly not to suggest that contemporary believers are as anguished or thoughtful as Augustine, but merely to note that certain convictions about the nature of revelation bind together the actions of ancients and moderns.

Yet precisely these convictions separate Wolfe from the objects of his study. Though he is wonderfully adept at presenting the incidents of modern religion, he cannot quite distill its essence. This is less the fault of the author than a result of the fact that those who lack religious devotion can never adequately describe, in the words of the book's subtitle, "how we actually live our faith."

Most readers will nevertheless recognize Wolfe's central claim: religious life in the United States certainly seems to be changing. The question left unaddressed, however, is *why*. What sequence of events led to this profound transformation? As a sociologist concerned with present-day descriptive analysis, Wolfe offers few clues.

TO GET A SENSE OF WHAT BROUGHT about the current state of American religion, one might turn to William R. Hutchison's *Religious Pluralism in America*. Hutchison, a senior scholar at the Harvard Divinity School, does not take a general approach to the topic. Instead, he concentrates on what many consider a—perhaps *the*—crucial development of modern-day religious life: pluralism.

Pluralism has a very specific meaning for Hutchison; it refers to "the acceptance and encouragement of diversity." Diversity is a social condition; pluralism, an ideal that embraces and celebrates that condition. This interplay of ideal and reality fascinates Hutchison, and it is this dynamic that he traces across two centuries. He certainly deserves credit for trying to reframe American religious history along these lines. It is an original approach, not least because it avoids treating religious history as the story of denominations and institutions. It is, moreover, a controversial approach, given that the strongest advocates of diversity tend to be the loud-

est critics of traditional narrative history, which, they claim, illicitly deprives marginal groups of their own, distinct particularity.

Hutchison finds three attitudes towards religious pluralism in American history: pluralism as toleration, as inclusion, and as participation. Although he warns against any sort of triumphalism—such pluralism "has been a work in progress" and "it still is"—Hutchison nevertheless sees these three phases as progressively ascending.

Hutchison contends that, even in the absence of genuine religious diversity, the founders espoused the pluralist ideal. Prior to the 19th century, practically all of the churches shared a common, Protestant heritage. Not until the first decades of the 19th century—with the emergence of Unitarianism, the irruption of Mormonism, and, especially, the deluge of Catholicism—did genuine diversity become a reality. Contingent upon their good behavior, such heterodox believers could expect legal and social toleration—but not much more. Though far from the robust pluralism that Hutchison champions, this arrangement was nevertheless far more accommodating than anything else on earth.

By the close of the 19th century, the pluralist ideal gradually shifted towards an ethic of inclusion. Once again, facts on the ground—this time, the massive influx of Catholics and Jews from southern and eastern Europe—presaged the change in attitude. Inclusive pluralism found its most successful metaphor in the melting-pot, an analogy that honored (past) diversity while celebrating (present) commonality. It was a tremendously successful notion; at the outbreak of the Second World War, the nation's religious DNA was widely thought to consist of interlocking Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish strands.

In the postwar period, however, still another understanding of pluralism came to the fore. Participation was the keynote of this refined pluralist sensibility; diversity was to be celebrated in the present, not the past, tense. This, Hutchison maintains, is pluralism proper, and he holds that it came about not a moment too soon: there are now in the United States more Hindus than Quakers, more Buddhists than Unitarians. In light of current trends, Hutchison closes the book with practical, moral, and theological arguments in defense of such religious multiculturalism.

IN BOTH CONCEPTION AND EXECUTION, the entire project reflects well on Hutchison. But for all of its merits, the book may be faulted on three grounds. First, it is not clear whether the recent explosion of religious diversity has been superficial or substantive. Indeed, as Wolfe illustrates, recently-arrived religious



groups are compelled to contend against the powerful undercurrents of American culture; as a matter of fact, Wolfe claims that such immigrants have more in common with American non-believers than with coreligionists overseas.

Second, Hutchison repeatedly alludes to pluralism-as-participation as among "the true implications of the nation's founding" and the "obvious implications of the Declaration of Independence," or, more concisely, as a "founding ideal." (That Hutchison would appeal to the founders is doubly puzzling, given that he later reproaches those who invoke original intent as mistakenly believing that the "Founding Fathers" of the revolutionary era had settled the question for all time.) The Declaration and the First Amendment mean a good many things, to be sure, but why they entail that individuals should affect a rigorous non-judgmentalism towards any religious belief is never demonstrated.

Third, and most seriously, Hutchison does not adequately account for the specific causes that have effected such changes in the pluralist ideal. In his examination of third-stage pluralism, he cites, in general, the various "campaigns for civil rights," and in particular, the ruling in *Brown v. Board* and the repeal of caps on immigration from Asia and the Pacific. This description may elucidate the progress of racial and ethnic pluralism, but it seems a rather thin explanation of why specifically religious pluralism developed along its present trajectory.

Entirely absent from Hutchison's account, for example, are those factors which have increasingly tended to expunge religion from civic life. The top-down pressures to strip the public square of any religious significance have occurred almost exactly in tandem with the latest evolution of pluralism, a coincidence that Hutchison never deigns to mention. The gradual excision of religion from public life—seen in the proscription of school prayer, the removal of religious symbols from public property, and the attempts to eliminate the phrase "under God" from the Pledge—has had a chilling effect on how believers express their religious convictions. Postwar constitutional jurisprudence accords a citizen's faith the utmost deference, so long as it remains practiced behind securely closed doors. Soulcraft, the judiciary has decreed, must be entirely dissociated from statecraft; no religious proposition can ever be normative, because all are inscrutable and, in the final analysis, irrational. Such reasoning has been a major driver of

advanced, non-judgmental, religious pluralism, and it is considered by Hutchison not at all.

THIS LINE OF REASONING—THAT religious beliefs are purely idiosyncratic and therefore unfit for public consideration—is hardly restricted to the domain of constitutional jurisprudence. It has in fact grafted itself onto the faith of many contemporary believers, decisively shaping modern devotion. Charles Taylor, perhaps the most accomplished living philosopher in the Anglophonic tradition, focuses specifically on this trend in his book, *The Varieties of Religion Today*.

Taylor takes his title and his point of departure from William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Taylor proposes that, despite the lapse of a century since its publication, James's book has an uncanny relevance for understanding contemporary religious life. "In passage after passage," writes Taylor, it "could have been written yesterday."

What sets James apart is his unique attentiveness to the momentous decision between belief and unbelief; he is, according to Taylor, "our great philosopher of the cusp." Alone and uncertain, modern man is pushed to the brink of existential self-determination without any of the points of reference that guided his grandfathers. In underscoring that fateful moment of choice, however, James exhibits his chief theoretical limitation, a tendency to regard religious experience in thoroughly individualistic terms. And yet Taylor proposes that perhaps "one might think that James was prescient in putting things this way."

Taylor takes this central Jamesian theme—the "bare point of choice"—and provides it with some much-needed historical texture. Its proximate origins, he claims, can be traced to the high Middle Ages, when a steadily increasing emphasis on a Christianity of personal devotion began to displace older models centered on collective ritual. Later on, the Protestant and Catholic Reformations of the 16th century further disseminated a sense of religion as primarily a matter of personal commitment.

Two crucial developments have occurred since then. The first, Taylor argues, was the signal achievement of the 18th century: the articulation of a doctrine of the rights of conscience. Proponents of that doctrine, however, never intended that religion should retreat from

public life. Religious association would now take place in consensually gathered congregations. Individuals could, of their own volition, join the church they found most amenable to salvation, willingly subscribing to its creed and code. These churches would in turn explain the moral universe that made sensible the doctrine of natural right. Their shared mission of cultivating civic virtue entitled the churches to a privileged position in civil society.

The second crucial development, according to Taylor, has been the cultural revolution of the second half of the 20th century. As one of its central tenets, this cultural revolution has professed a new kind of individualism, with profound implications for social life in the Western world. Under the terms of this "culture of authenticity," the purpose of human existence is identified as living in accord with one's egoistic preferences to the greatest extent possible. Its adherents aspire above all else to be true to their innermost selves. Unencumbered by tradition, etiquette, morality, patriotism, or piety, they studiously resist the judgments of others, just as they disdain passing judgment themselves. The implications for the conditions of belief are profound. As Taylor sees it, there is no longer any "necessary embedding of our link to the sacred in any particular broader framework, whether church or state." Faith has been summarily privatized, and "the spiritual as such is no longer intrinsically related to society." One simply cannot understand contemporary religious life without accounting for this turn to solipsistic individualism.

Taylor's book neatly supplements those of Wolfe and Hutchison. Although Wolfe skillfully depicts its effects, he has little to say about the causes of this great cultural transformation. And although Hutchison adequately describes its evolution, he is inattentive to anything that would cast his preferred notion of pluralism in an unfavorable light. Taylor sidesteps both pitfalls, providing a plausible explanation of long-term trends in religious life and acknowledging both the advantages and the disadvantages of the modern religious sensibility. His is that rare achievement: an elegant theory of modern religion, succinctly and modestly presented, that amid all the flux can credibly claim to see some order.

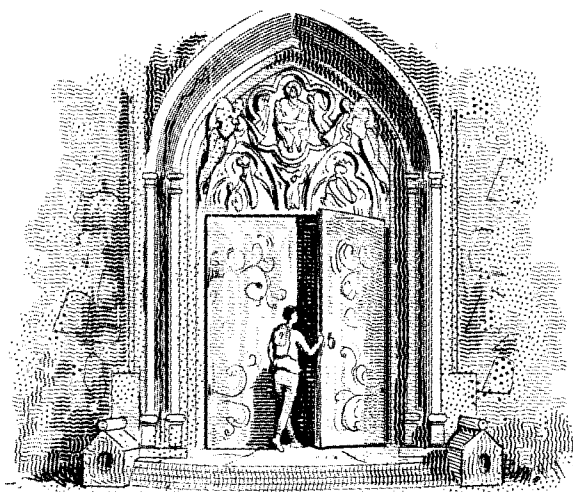
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Book Review by Scott Walter

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Letters to a Young Catholic, by George Weigel.
Basic Books, 208 pages, \$22.50



PART OF THE APPEAL OF ALLAN BLOOM'S bestselling *The Closing of the American Mind* was his frank recognition that adolescence is a time of powerful longings, both high and low. As a great teacher, he yearned to find students whose souls had not been flattened by modern crudities, who enjoyed strong attachments to faith, family, and country, even though he hoped to give them a philosophic education that would largely liberate them from those attachments.

The loftiest attachments are those to faith, philosophy's great rival, and Bloom displayed considerable respect, even nostalgia, for this endangered element of American life. He traced a steep decline from his grandparents—who, though "ignorant by our standards," were "spiritually rich" because of their lived faith—to his own generation of the family, all with M.D.s or Ph.D.s but lacking "any comparable learning."

I am not saying anything so trite as that life is fuller when people have myths to live by. I mean rather that a life based on the Book is closer to the truth, that it provides the material for deeper research in and access to the real nature of things.

Bloom placed such hopes as he had in other books, because he believed that in America he was witnessing the Bible's "gradual and inevitable disappearance." But his gloomy claim is itself a statement of faith that may not withstand scrutiny.

Perhaps the strongest evidence against Bloom's claim is Pope John Paul II, who draws Woodstock-size crowds of the young at will. (Actually, the pope's last World Youth Day

was twice as big as Woodstock.) Who today has a more powerful Socratic draw on open-hearted youth?

It is fitting, then, that George Weigel, the pope's acclaimed biographer, should write *Letters to a Young Catholic*, the latest entrant in Basic Books' "Art of Mentoring" series. In fourteen letters and a "postcard," Weigel writes neither a defense of the faith nor a handbook for Catholic living. Instead, he writes for "young Catholics—and not-so-young Catholics, and indeed curious souls of any religious persuasion or none—who wonder what it means to be a Catholic" in this new century.

Instead of dry lectures on saints, sacraments, and the like, Weigel provides an elegant "epistolary tour of the Catholic world," bringing to life places that have shaped his own understanding. And so he takes his readers to the Baltimore Cathedral in which he grew up in the 1950s and '60s, to Flannery O'Connor's farm, to Rome for the Sistine Chapel and Saint Peter's bones, the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, Chesterton's favorite pub, the churchyard of a Polish priest martyred for supporting Solidarity, and several other evocative sites. In this way, he covers concisely a vast array of topics without argumentativeness, embracing a gritty realism and exhorting the young never to settle "for less than the spiritual and moral grandeur which, by grace, can be yours."

Weigel does not sneer at the Catholic ghetto he is just old enough to have experienced, even though it included a teaching nun who denied that the earth revolved around the sun. Yet he is no "pre-Vatican II Catholic." He knows the dangers of "a brittle form of Catholic orthodoxy" that could fear the work of such powerful

thinkers as his heroes John Henry Newman and John Paul II, both of whom have been attacked as dangerous innovators ("the good ones are always dangerous," Flannery O'Connor cracked).

For all its strengths, the old Catholic ghetto was too often blinkered and timid in its thinking, trapped in "coloring-book scholasticism," as one wag put it—and deserving of Leo Strauss's complaint that its typical Thomist did not deeply engage the modern predicament. But as Weigel makes clear to his young reader, one of the marks of this ancient Church is her ability to make herself "young" again without changing her fundamental identity, an ability that even Strauss acknowledged when he wrote that the Catholic Church "has maintained throughout the ages" her "inflexible principles . . . by means of a most flexible policy."

Bloom may have spoken too soon when he wrote off the young and lamented the disappearance of Biblical faith. Pope Leo XIII was wiser when he wrote in *Rerum novarum* (1891) that "all struggle against nature is in vain." Though modernity may seek to demean the young to the last man, so to speak, even today's juvenile delinquents hang icons of rap stars and thereby display immortal souls yearning to look up to—to worship—*something*. What proportion will make their oblations on the altars of rap versus the Rock of Saint Peter is unclear. What is undeniable is the appeal of Peter's Church to precisely the kind of youth Bloom wished to teach.

NOR DOES FAITH OFFER ONLY AN EDUCATION of the sentiments, as Bloom sometimes seemed to imply, ennobling a youth's heart before he is led out of the cave to

the harsh landscape of philosophy. In this regard, one of the best stories Weigel tells is that of Edith Stein. Born in 1891 and raised Jewish, she lost her faith while still young. A brilliant philosophy student, she became a protégé of Husserl. She bumped into Catholicism, so to speak, in the person of another Husserl disciple, Max Scheler, but he made little impression. Only years later while visiting friends did Stein happen to pull off a bookshelf the *Autobiography* of Teresa of Avila, the Spanish Carmelite. Stein

got no sleep that night. At dawn, she finished reading and said, simply, "This is the truth." She then went out to buy a catechism and a missal. Four months or so later, she was baptized. Twenty-one years later, as a Carmelite nun, she was martyred in the gas chambers of Auschwitz.

Stein was not enraptured by romantic novels, gripped by "high politics," or bent on sublimating her bodily drives. Nor was her rigorous mind abandoning "reason," as her post-conversion writings make clear. What led her to an austere life as a Carmelite and ultimately to a death worthy of Socrates or Jesus, was an appetitive intellect and a hungry soul. Weigel quotes a biographer's summation: "So convinced was she of the truth of St. Teresa's experience that she had to acknowledge the source of that experience as Truth itself."

The incident proves Weigel's point: for Christians, the truth of faith is found not in abstractions but in a person who has entered into our history. This faith is the supreme example of something Bloom lauded in his introduction to the *Republic*: reaching a "sureness grounded on a perception of the universal seen through the particular."

The encounter with that person can be as traumatic as any other where *philia* and *eros* are at stake. Weigel, echoing the *Phaedrus*, admits it is not easy to open yourself to another, to give up cold calculation and instead give yourself without limit. Certainly it is not possible under the sway of a modern rationalism which finds, as Weigel and Chesterton note, that it "understands everything, and everything does not seem worth understanding."

What counts most for Weigel and his depiction of the faith, then, are truth and love, and his two best "letters" are devoted to these. His letter from Newman's Birmingham Oratory attacks "liberal religion," religion that eschews unchanging, challenging truths and seeks instead an "ice-your-own-cupcake world." This irrational sentimentality has no place in a religion founded on crucifixion and unalterable revelation. Nor will Weigel stand for narrowing the young's vision to the limits of reductionist science à la Carl Sagan, a "science" which does not even know that men have souls, much less how to appeal to their deepest longings.

SENTIMENTALITY AND SCIENTISM BOTH collapse ineluctably into nihilism, the final enemy not only of truth but even of love, though not necessarily of pleasure. Weigel worries, above all, about "debonair nihilism," a term he takes from Bloom by way of their mutual friend Fr. Ernest Fortin, "the nihilism that enjoys itself on the way to oblivion." Against the nihilist's faith that "nothing is really of consequence, Catholicism insists that *everything* is of consequence, because *everything* has been redeemed."

Truth is addressed to the whole man and demands the kind of response a lover demands. And thus (pardon my numerology)

Weigel's *central* letter, and his best, is devoted to the ladder of love. He writes it from Castle Howard, the Yorkshire manse that helped inspire Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*. That novel, Weigel explains, ascends through three love stories: First, protagonist Charles Ryder has a schoolboy crush at Oxford on Sebastian, wanton heir of the old Catholic family of Brideshead. Next, Charles falls more deeply in love with Sebastian's sister Julia. But she finally breaks off this adulterous affair after her wayward father returns to the Church as he's dying. Though Charles is deeply wounded by Julia's fidelity to the demands of her faith, the novel hints at his growing understanding of a love beyond any he had known. Finally, the novel closes when, years later, he returns to the Brideshead estate and finds himself kneeling happily in the chapel, amidst the bad art that had long offended him.

Weigel summarizes the novel in a manner reminiscent of Plato's *Symposium* and *Lysis*: "Each lesser love is real and valuable, but at the same time inadequate: each is a means pointing beyond itself to a more satisfactory end." Even in this praise of love Weigel's realism remains firm. "You will stumble on the ladder of love, and you will fall," he warns. But "that's no reason to lower the bar of expectation."

"Great expectations," in fact, could be Weigel's subtitle, for that is what he hopes to inspire in youthful souls with his graceful meditations on truth, beauty, and love. His wise letters may beguile at least some of the best youths away from the cult of Ecstasy and Puff Daddy and toward a way of life far more erotic and rational.

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Book Review by Romanus Cessario

THE SPIRIT'S BREATH

The Bible in English: Its History and Influence, by David Daniell.
Yale University Press, 920 pages, \$40

IN SAINT JOHN'S ACCOUNT OF THE TRIAL before Pontius Pilate, Christ asserts that he has come into the world that he "should bear witness unto the truth," and Pilate's reply is "Quid est veritas?" "What is truth?" This well-known retort (John 18:38) supplies a good starting point for a review of David Daniell's 900-page study of English versions of the Christian Bible. Pilate's question, after all, is one of the few examples of a complete New Testament sentence that is translated identical-

ly in the *King James Version* (1611); J. B. Phillips, *The Gospels in Modern English* (1952); the *Revised Standard Version* (1952); *The Living Bible* (1962-82); *The New English Bible* (1970); *Today's English Version* (also *Good News Bible*, 1976); and the *New International Version* (1978). Daniell's fascinating and well-researched study shows that identical translations of original texts constitute a rare occurrence in the history of the English Bible.

The present study also reveals that there are more English translations of the Bible than most

church-going Christians may have imagined. In fact, the author's nine-page "Chronological List of Bibles in English to Which Reference is Made" comprises only a small fraction of the 3,000 or so English versions and fresh editions that find their way into the specialized catalogues. How does one choose a reliable translation?

The author, professor emeritus of English at University College, London, dedicates his study "To the memory of William Tyndale, ?1494-1536, translator of genius, martyred

for giving English readers the Bible from the original languages." David Daniell has already published modern editions of Tyndale's *Old Testament* and *New Testament*, and he is not only one of Tyndale's biographers but also one of his deep admirers. The book's dedication in fact expresses the author's *a priori* criterion for evaluating English editions of the Christian Bible: translations from the original languages that respect the native purity of the English language. Whatever is seen to promote translations from the original languages merits praise, while anything that represents heteronomous control over the sacred texts raises suspicions, at least. This book exhibits little sympathy for anything that smacks of the Latinate or Romance languages. Instead, Tyndale's "vivid prose" and preference for "monosyllables" supply the measure against which evaluations of English style are made.

Tyndale, his "genius," remains the hero of Daniell's book. It is difficult, however, to separate views about Tyndale, who died a Protestant martyr near Brussels in the fall of 1536, from the religious persuasions of those who hold these views. Readers of *The Bible in English* find themselves inescapably surrounded by the confessional differences that emerged, during the early 16th century, as a result of the various efforts at reform that occurred both in England and on the Continent.

DURING THE 1530S, IT WAS NOT ALWAYS apparent how to distinguish Protestant from Roman Catholic. Nor was it easy to sort out allegiances. For instance, Tyndale was executed two years after the 1534 Supremacy of the Crown Act that confirmed to Henry VIII and his successors the title of "the only supreme head in earth of the church of England, called *Anglicana Ecclesia*." Daniell reports that the English court made efforts to secure Tyndale's release from the Imperial jail, but these failed for reasons that remain unclear. In any case, Tyndale's last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes." English Chancellor Thomas More was executed in London a year before Tyndale, on July 6, 1535. He was convicted of having denied the Royal Supremacy, and died professing himself "the King's good servant, but God's first." While still in the service of King Henry and thus, presumably, with the monarch's approval, Sir Thomas More had been Tyndale's most forceful and voluminous critic. One understands why contemporary historians of 16th-century religious movements warn against facile readings of the word "reform."

Daniell's own account of More's critique shows how confessional differences continue to govern the way good-willed persons evaluate

Tyndale's contributions to the 16th-century reform of Latin Christianity. "At bottom," writes Daniell, "More asserts that Tyndale's offence has been to give the people Paul in English, and to translate key words in their Greek meanings as 'senior', 'congregation', 'love' and 'repent', instead of the Church's 'priest', 'church', 'charity' and 'do penance.'" Students of theology and even devout Christians will recognize the controversies suggested by this brief lexicon of New Testament words. The doctrinal issues at stake include the reality of a sacramental priesthood, a specific ecclesial structure, the personal practice of the theological life, and the enactment of sacramentalized atonement in union with that of Christ Himself. Catholic doctrine and practice in these areas still form the basis for ecumenical dialogue between Roman Catholics and those Christians who descend from 16th-century reform movements. In one place, the author acknowledges that there exists among translators of the Bible a "Catholic/Protestant divide."

There are scattered references in *The Bible in English* to the Council of Trent, but it is clear that the author finds little to commend in the second decree of the fourth session, which declares "that the ancient Vulgate edition, which has been approved by the Church herself through long usage for so many centuries, should be considered the authentic edition for public reading, disputations, sermons, and explanations." On the contrary, Daniell opines that the "Vulgate was incomprehensible to the ploughboy and most of his familiars throughout the land." He further asserts, "What the priests let the people know was a fraction of the whole Bible." To what extent these assertions correspond to the reality of English Catholic life before the 1530s remains open to debate. What, however, strikes this reviewer is that the author demonstrates little inclination to try to understand why the Church (and her "authorities") would have wanted to protect the Bible from possible abuse at the hands of perhaps well-intentioned but sometimes erring scholars, such as John Wyclif, who eventually renounced the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Daniell includes reports on English Bibles before the advent of the printing press. His critical focus, however, centers on the "terrifying restrictions" that he believes were imposed in England after 1409, the date when Archbishop Arundel sought to address the inconveniences of Lollardism, which taught an early form of predestination while denying the authority of the Church and its teachings on the Eucharist. Disciplinary actions in the form of "Constitutions" did result from a provincial or regional council that was held at Oxford. Arundel's council had to address the *de facto*

connection between the circulation of vernacular Bibles and the spread of heresy, which always constitutes a departure from biblical truth. What Daniell fails to emphasize, however, is that this same council made it clear that translations into the vernacular could receive Church approval.

Most of the book, however, treats the developments in "englishing the Bible"—to borrow a phrase from the Catholic convert Ronald Knox—that occur after the 16th century. Tyndale's shadow extends even into the 1980s. The author notes that an English translator of the *Jerusalem Bible*, Dom Henry Wansbrough, admired the 16th-century Bible translator. One can at least appreciate Wansbrough's literary taste. In fact, it remains characteristic of modern Catholic biblical scholarship—for example, the 1968 *Jerome Biblical Commentary*—to acknowledge that "Tyndale's vigorous English left a permanent mark on the history of the English Bible."

CATHOLIC PRINTED BIBLES INCLUDE two types of translations, those made from the Vulgate and those from the original languages. The Douay-Rheims translation (1582-1609) is the earliest and the Knox translations (1944-50) are the latest of the first type; while the *New Confraternity Bible* (1952-68) marks the beginning of the latter type, issued after Pope Pius XII's *Divino Afflante Spiritu* in 1943. The allusion to the "breathing forth of the divine Spirit" points to Catholic teaching on the divine inspiration of the biblical authors.

To the best of my knowledge, a complete analysis of the evolution of Catholic practice with respect to vernacular translations of the Bible from the original languages has still to be written, at least from a Catholic standpoint. Such an effort would have to take account of what Catholics believe about the relationship of the biblical texts to the deposit of faith. In 1993, the Pontifical Biblical Commission expressed itself on this point: "What characterizes Catholic exegesis is that it deliberately places itself *within the living tradition of the Church*, whose first concern is fidelity to the revelation attested by the Bible" [emphasis added]. Others must judge whether this principle can be reconciled with the Protestant notion of *sola Scriptura*. I do think, however, that such a Catholic interpretation of the Bible informed those Church authorities of yesteryear who sought to modify even the most stylistically perfect of English translations.

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Book Review by Paul A. Cantor

HISTORY PLAYS

The Age of Shakespeare, by Frank Kermode.
Modern Library, 240 pages, \$21.95 (cloth), \$12.95 (paper)

Imagining Shakespeare, by Stephen Orgel.
Palgrave, 192 pages, \$26.95



SHAKESPEARE HAS A WAY OF BRING-
ing out the best in people, from actors
to directors to stage designers, and this
principle even seems to work for literary critics.
At a time when literary criticism has generally
become unreadable and unread, good books on
Shakespeare continue to appear and evident-
ly find a market, as witness these volumes by
Frank Kermode and Stephen Orgel. In many
respects, they represent the opposite poles in
literary criticism today—what might be called
the old versus the new historicism. Kermode
stands for traditional critical approaches, and
is indeed one of the most distinguished older
scholars in the Renaissance field. Moreover
his book is addressed to a general audience,
not a specifically academic one, and is largely
intended to introduce readers to Shakespeare,
to give an overview of his career and place him
in the context of his age. In short, *The Age of
Shakespeare* is the kind of book that inevitably
gets described as a great scholar's summation of
a lifetime's study of his favorite subject.

Orgel, by contrast, stands for the avant-
garde in literary criticism, although the move-
ments he is associated with have been around
so long—over two decades—that they have in
fact become the establishment in the academy
and have virtually displaced traditional modes
of criticism. Orgel would probably be best de-
scribed as a new historicist, but his work links
up with feminism, gay studies, and other forms
of the race/class/gender criticism that domi-

nates the academic world today. Thus his book
is basically addressed to a specialized academic
audience, and he tries to break new ground in
Shakespeare studies. The result is that he often
explores issues that a general reader would find
overly theoretical, arcane, or just plain weird.
But one could easily overstate the difference be-
tween Kermode's work and Orgel's. Kermode
has obviously been keeping up with contempo-
rary criticism, and incorporates many new his-
toricist insights into his account of Shakespeare
(while still maintaining a healthy skepticism
about some of the excesses of the approach).
By the same token, Orgel is at his best when he
just offers intelligent readings of Shakespeare's
plays, trying to figure out what they mean even
though on theoretical grounds he may think
that goal is impossible.

Kermode has taken on a daunting task
in *The Age of Shakespeare*. In just under 200
pages, he is trying to provide his readers with
the basic background information needed to
understand and appreciate Shakespeare. Of
course no one book could fully accomplish this
goal, but Kermode has made a valiant effort,
and *The Age of Shakespeare* now stands as one
of the best compact introductions to the sub-
ject. Kermode covers a remarkable amount of
ground in such a brief book. He discusses what
we know of Shakespeare's life, he sets him in his
historical context, stressing the central religious
and political conflicts of the Elizabethan Age,
and he relates Shakespeare's achievement to the

larger literary currents of his day, naturally em-
phasizing theater history but also focusing on
Shakespeare's lyric poetry and its connections to
that of his contemporaries, such as Ben Jonson
and John Donne. And finally, interspersed
throughout Kermode's account are capsule dis-
cussions of each of Shakespeare's plays that trace
the unfolding of his career as a dramatist.

Treating each of Shakespeare's plays in
roughly two to four pages apiece is the most
difficult challenge Kermode set himself, and
the results vary. He spends a disproportion-
ate amount of time, for example, on some of
Shakespeare's lesser works, such as the early and
comparatively slight comedy, *Love's Labour's Lost*;
and his discussion of the great tragedies is nec-
essarily a little disappointing, since it is impos-
sible in a few pages to do justice to works of the
complexity of *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. Kermode
is at his best when discussing the middle phase
of Shakespeare's career and specifically the ro-
mantic comedies. He does a particularly good
job relating *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and
The Merchant of Venice to *Romeo and Juliet* and
Richard II, showing how a number of motifs
run through these plays and tie them together,
cutting across the divide between comedy and
tragedy.

The sections on theater history are among
the strongest parts of *The Age of Shakespeare*.
Kermode deftly gives his reader a feel for the
popular nature of Shakespeare's medium, often
drawing apt parallels with contemporary equiv-



alents. After pointing out “that the Elizabethan taste for plays was of a piece with a love for other public entertainments such as fencing, bear-baiting, and cock-fighting,” Kermode reminds his readers: “Londoners may reflect that in our own time the Albert Hall is a multipurpose amphitheater, used for operas, symphony concerts, boxing, tennis tournaments, and national celebrations like Armistice Day.” At the same time, Kermode does not fail to call our attention to some crucial ways in which Shakespeare’s theater differed from what we are familiar with today: “few theatrical historians omit to remind us that these theaters had no lavatories.”

IN HIS DISCUSSION OF SHAKESPEARE’S life, Kermode proves to be a paragon of restraint, especially by comparison with Michael Wood’s recent biography, which borders on a work of fiction (see “Average Bill,” Summer 2004). Kermode generally sticks to the facts, such as we know them, even when in Shakespeare’s case they are disappointingly bare: “Despite many guesses, we know little about his private life at that time except that he must have been secure financially and keen to remain so.” As a sign that Kermode does pay attention to contemporary criticism, he devotes a great deal of space to one of the latest trends in Shakespeare studies: “Some conjectures now in fashion require us to believe that the poet was, or had been, Catholic, and that his Catholic faith was one reason why he found himself working in the London theater.” To his credit, Kermode allows those who view Shakespeare as Catholic to have their say, but he also notes the highly hypothetical character of their reasoning: “It will perhaps be noticed that these speculations grow more and more far-fetched as one ‘might have’ succeeds another, or a ‘may well have’ or a ‘surely.’” Kermode quite properly turns from biographical speculation to the plays themselves for evidence on the issue of Shakespeare’s Catholicism: “Had he been, as some claim, a lifelong Catholic, it is strange that no unequivocal trace of his beliefs can be found in his thirty-seven plays.” Kermode goes on to cite some of the evidence for Shakespeare’s Protestant sympathies, such as the fact that when he quotes from or alludes to the Old and New Testaments, he often uses the 1560 Geneva Bible, the preferred text of Protestants in his day (the King James Version did not come out until 1611).

Kermode attributes the new vogue for viewing Shakespeare as a Catholic to sentimentality, and as evidence he quotes Peter Milward from an essay called “Religion in Arden”: “Surely... from the depths of his heart Shakespeare looks fondly back to the time before far-reaching changes had been inaugurated by Henry VIII.” But claims such as this are rooted in something deeper than mere sentimentality. Kermode gets

closer to the heart of the matter earlier in his account of the Reformation in England when he speaks up on behalf of Protestantism: “Of course a case can also be made for the beneficial effects of the new Protestantism, and indeed some say that the notion of undisturbed Catholic contentment suddenly and barbarously interrupted by Reform is mere propaganda. The intellectual and educational achievements of Protestantism, it is argued, are in the Catholic version of events much undervalued.” Indeed, presenting Shakespeare as a Catholic is a way of rejecting what came to be known as the Whig interpretation of history—the view that the Reformation was part of a progressive process that took England out of the Dark Ages of the medieval world and into the enlightenment of the modern age.

Those who argue for Shakespeare’s Catholicism do not want the greatest writer in English to serve as a poster child for Protestant modernity as progress. I suspect that their real motivation stems from the association in their minds between Protestantism and capitalism, a way of thinking that in England goes back at least as far as R. H. Tawney’s *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1926). As 19th-century writers such as John Ruskin and William Morris evince, the English have a long tradition of linking nostalgia for the Middle Ages with critiques of capitalism. Given the anti-capitalist bias of most literary critics today, the promotion of the idea of Shakespeare as a Catholic is probably rooted in an economic, rather than a religious agenda. The celebration of the Catholic Middle Ages in literary criticism is at heart a championing of what amounts to a pre-capitalist utopia, with about as much reality as Tolkien’s Rivendell.

Kermode does not share my suspicions about the anti-capitalism of the partisans of Shakespeare’s Catholicism. Indeed he makes several anti-capitalist remarks himself, as in this characterization of the Elizabethan economy: “So the rich grew richer, their lives more luxurious and ostentatious, while the poor grew poorer. These were the early days of capitalism.” Like many literary critics when they stray into the unfamiliar territory of economics, Kermode confuses capitalism with mercantilism—the very system it set out to displace. As Kermode himself shows, the Elizabethan economy was characterized, not by free markets, but by government-granted monopolies; not by free trade, but by imperialism. Kermode reveals that anti-capitalist prejudices are deeply rooted in the English academic tradition, and predate quasi-Marxist movements like cultural materialism and the new historicism. But at least Kermode avoids the excesses of such movements and especially their tendency to politicize discussions of Shakespeare. He questions, for example, the new historicist at-

tempts to read *The Tempest* as if it participated in the ideology of European imperialism. But if Kermode is alert to the dangers of politicized readings of Shakespeare, he is at times too eager to dismiss any sort of political reading at all: “Perhaps the connection between plays and contemporary politics was less close and important than is sometimes alleged.” Here Kermode’s traditionalism actually stands in the way of his appreciating a whole dimension of Shakespeare’s achievement—the way genuine political concerns stand at the center of many of his plays.

FOR MORE RADICAL READINGS OF SHAKESPEARE, we need only turn to Stephen Orgel. He does not offer as comprehensive a treatment of Shakespeare as Kermode does; indeed in many respects his *Imagining Shakespeare* reads more like a collection of separate essays than a single, sustained inquiry. But if Orgel’s book is not strictly unified, that is only appropriate, because in fact he does not wish to present a unified image of Shakespeare. The aim of *Imagining Shakespeare* might be described as the destabilization and deconstruction of our image of Shakespeare—of Shakespeare the man, of the texts of his plays, and above all of their meaning. In a chapter entitled “History and Biography,” for example, Orgel examines the literal images of Shakespeare that have come down to us, the few purported contemporary portraits, as well as later manufactured “likenesses,” including such remarkable inventions as a Shakespeare death mask that surfaced in Germany in 1849 and James Sant’s quaint Victorian painting, *Shakespeare as a Boy of Twelve*. Orgel has always been interested in the relation of the visual arts to literature, most notably in his studies of the Jacobean court masque, and he has an acute eye for visual detail. All the chapters of *Imagining Shakespeare* are lavishly illustrated, often with rare and fascinating material. In the chapter on visual representations of Shakespeare, Orgel reminds us that, even though the image of Shakespeare has become one of the central icons of our culture, we do not in fact know what he really looked like. The contemporary portraits are of varying degrees of authenticity, and, in any event, they do not present a consistent image of the playwright. Later representations of Shakespeare show how much we are tempted to mold our image of him in accord with varying ideas of what we wish he had looked like. An accurate visual representation of Shakespeare simply eludes us.

The chapter on Shakespeare portraits might stand as an emblem for Orgel’s book as a whole. He is trying to show that we are always *imagining* Shakespeare. The centuries-old project of plucking out the heart of the mystery of Shakespeare, of uncovering the

authentic truth about him and his plays, is for Orgel from the start a chimerical quest. Just as there is no authentic visual likeness of Shakespeare, there is no authentic Shakespeare at all. We are always inventing and re-inventing Shakespeare in accord with our desires and fantasies, for, as Orgel might put it, our experience of Shakespeare is fundamentally *theatrical*. We have no real Shakespeare, only representations of Shakespeare. This view of Shakespeare has become common among the new historicists and their associates, and has led them to study what is called the reception of Shakespeare and his plays, how his work has been received over the centuries, which means how it has been reinterpreted and recreated. This approach is in line with the general tendency of contemporary criticism to deny that works of literature have determinate and determinable meanings. Studying the reception of Shakespeare's plays points us in the direction of multiplicity of meanings, since each generation finds something new in each of his plays.

Several of Orgel's chapters are exercises in reception history, as he looks at how plays such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Merchant of Venice* have been staged, performed, costumed, illustrated, discussed, analyzed, and otherwise represented over the years. These chapters vary in quality. The one on *The Winter's Tale*, for example, has a promising beginning, as Orgel starts off from the intriguing fact that the play contains Shakespeare's only reference to an artist roughly from his day, Giulio Romano. But as the title of the chapter—"The Pornographic Ideal"—might have warned us, Orgel seems to bring up Romano chiefly to be able to show some dirty pictures and to use some four-letter words. He does eventually get around to an interesting discussion of how the statue scene at the end of *The Winter's Tale* has been variously staged, and includes some remarkable photographs, going well back into the 19th century, of famous actresses in the role of Hermione. But the chapter overall has a disjointed character, and I am not sure exactly what Orgel is getting at in trying to view *The Winter's Tale* against the background of Romano's obscene woodcuts. This seems to be reception history at its most arbitrary, and illustrates the chief vice of the new historicists, the way they randomly throw together cultural elements from widely disparate realms. Giulio Romano may be mentioned in *The Winter's Tale*, and he may have created some obscene woodcuts, but that does not mean that there is a pornographic subtext in Shakespeare's play.

BY CONTRAST, IN ORGEL'S CHAPTER ON *A Midsummer Night's Dream* his typical new historicist moves generally work, resulting in the highpoint of the book and one of the

most suggestive and illuminating discussions I have read of this play. Orgel takes his cue from a number of 20th-century productions that have brought out what he calls "the play's view of sexuality as a universal and basically anarchic motivation." These avant-garde productions presented gender as fluid by employing various forms of cross-dressing and highlighted a dark and even potentially tragic side to the sexuality in the play by portraying it as a repressed force that might at any moment violently break out of the boundaries trying to contain it, especially the marriage vow. Orgel refers, for example, to "John Hancock's landmark production at the Actors' Workshop in San Francisco in 1966... which took seriously the fact that Theseus is a warrior and Hippolyta both an Amazon and the spoils of his victory, not a romantic heroine but a captive enemy. Hancock brought her on stage in the opening scene in a cage, dressed in a tiger skin, snarling and delivering her romantic lines with heavy sarcasm from behind bars." Orgel views this kind of creative stage interpretation of the play as a useful antidote to a critical tradition that "has been quite uniform in denying that there is any sexual complexity beneath the comic surface of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*." Orgel goes on to show how considering the mythological background of the play casts it in a new and darker light, indeed a larger tragic context. Theseus marries Hippolyta only after betraying his earlier love, Ariadne, and the product of this marriage will be his son Hippolytus, who eventually becomes the subject of tragedy when Theseus later marries Phaedra and she conceives an overwhelming passion for her stepson. As Orgel writes: "This, indeed—not the romance of young love but the uncontrollable, destructive and incestuous nature of passion—is the central element in the myth." Viewed against this mythic background, the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta celebrated in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* starts to look ominous indeed.

Orgel may be going too far in suggesting a tragic dimension to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but he is right that the view of love in the play is genuinely complex and not simply light-hearted and comic. That is why the play seems to be paired in Shakespeare's imagination with *Romeo and Juliet*, which shows how the romantic love that has a comic resolution in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* might just as easily have led to a tragic end (parodied within *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by the Pyramis and Thisbe interlude—to add another level of complexity). Avant-garde productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* thus led Orgel to a long hidden truth about the play, what one might call the heart of its mystery. But something peculiar is happening here. For a change, Orgel seems to be talking about what Shakespeare really meant in one of his plays. He seems to be contrasting the way most interpre-

tations falsely construe the play with the way he and the avant-garde productions get it right and reveal what Shakespeare truly had in mind:

A Midsummer Night's Dream, it is often claimed, was written to celebrate a wedding, though no one has succeeded in finding the wedding. Still, it concludes on the eve of three fictive marriages, and therefore would hardly be expected to probe the dark side of its subject; but perhaps the relentlessly festive view most productions and commentators have taken of this comedy is more a function of what audiences, readers and critics have wished to ignore than of Shakespeare's way of fulfilling his putative commission.

Throughout most of his discussion of the reception of Shakespeare's plays, Orgel refuses to discriminate among different interpretations, as if he wants to let everyone have his or her say on the subject. Indeed he wishes to deny that Shakespeare's plays have any authentic core of meaning; in his view they come to life only in stage productions and other forms of representation, and take on multiple meanings in that process. As his book concludes:

What audiences want is never a constant, and is determinable by actors, directors and producers, moreover, only through trial and error, and largely in hindsight; and this is true in great measure because the very notion of the audience as a unit with definable tastes and responses is suspect.... Having begun with scripts and performers, here is where we must conclude: the essence of drama, the theater's life and soul, is finally the audience.

This sounds very eloquent, but what Orgel is saying is that the audience basically determines what Shakespeare's plays mean. And yet in his discussion of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* he chides traditional audiences for the way they have been willfully blind to the darker implications of what Shakespeare is trying to show about love and marriage. In short, when Orgel has his own agenda to pursue—he is intent on using *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to raise doubts about the ideal of heterosexual marriage—he is willing to discriminate between what Shakespeare really meant and what audiences and critics have mistakenly seen in the play. I happen to think that Orgel's interpretation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is correct, or at least that it brings out one side of the play that has been largely and unjustly ignored over the years. But the way Orgel reads *A Midsummer Night's Dream* contradicts his general view about

how Shakespeare is to be interpreted, namely, that every interpretation of Shakespeare over the years has its own validity and somehow contributes to the meaning of his works.

ORGEL IS THUS WILLING TO ALLOW a Shakespeare play a determinate meaning as long as that meaning is subversive, and above all subversive of social conventions such as marriage. This is a good point on which to contrast Orgel's new historicism with Kermode's old historicism. Orgel's book obviously has an edginess that Kermode's lacks. Orgel brings up subjects—pornography, incest, homosexuality, sodomy—that Kermode shies away from. As a new historicist, Orgel believes that all history is a social construction—and specifically constructed to serve the interests of those in power. Orgel would like to deconstruct those power formations and liberate us from their spell. Accordingly, Orgel's Shakespeare may be imagined, but ultimately imagined in such a way as to make us feel uncomfortable, to shake us up and free us from our conventional attitudes. As an old historicist, Kermode believes in the historical reality of Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Age, and he anchors his discussion in that reality. Thus Kermode does not come up with an "uncomfortable" Shakespeare; in fact he presents us with a Shakespeare who fits quite comfortably into his age, linking up with his contemporaries in his attitudes and his artistic techniques.

In particular, unlike Orgel, Kermode has a hard time imagining that there could be anything subversive about Shakespeare's plays; indeed he questions whether any plays in the Elizabethan Age could have been other than orthodox. After all, the plays were censored by the Lord Chamberlain's Office, specifically by the Master of the Revels, and as Kermode writes: "it is unlikely that many plays that could be thought

sedition or otherwise objectionable would have been submitted to his office." Kermode later makes the same point when talking specifically about *Macbeth*: "It was not very likely that Shakespeare's Scottish play, performed by the company the King himself sponsored, would offer anything subversive and in many respects *Macbeth* is a tribute to the King and his lineage." The one possibility that Kermode does not consider is that a subversive message in the play might escape the scrutiny of a censor, that Shakespeare, for example, might have learned to write in such a way that he conveyed subversive meanings to alert viewers or readers, while appearing to be perfectly orthodox to the conventional mind of a censor. *Macbeth* may appear to celebrate the ancestry of James I, but does the play really offer an attractive portrait of Scotland? Does it not in fact portray Scotland as barbaric, especially by comparison with England? On reflection *Macbeth* does not seem to be the most flattering way to commemorate the ascension of a Scotsman to the English throne.

Despite Kermode's insistence that there is nothing subversive in Shakespeare's plays, he himself cites the case of a "copy of the Second Folio (1632) that was censored by the [Spanish] Inquisition." (The censor was an English Jesuit named William Sankey, preparing reading matter sometime in the 1640s for students at the English College at Valladolid, Spain; for the fascinating details, see the appendix of Roland Mushat Frye's *Shakespeare and Christian Doctrine*.) Perhaps Shakespeare's contemporaries were not as persuaded as Kermode that his plays are not at all subversive. Kermode says that the Catholic censor "bafflingly cut the whole of *Measure for Measure*." Perhaps this censor saw what Kermode fails to see—that this play may be astonishingly anti-Catholic in its implications and perhaps even anti-Christian. Set in Vienna, the

Habsburg heart of the Holy Roman Empire, *Measure for Measure* seems to show the impossibility of a truly Christian regime, and in particular the disastrous results of trying to take one's bearings in politics from the ideal of holiness. When one tries to force human beings to live up to an overly strict standard of chastity, the result is that the law loses all authority in the face of the natural impulses of the human heart (in the daring symbolic terms of the play, the nunnery is inevitably shadowed by the whorehouse). No wonder Fr. Sankey cut not just selected passages but the whole of *Measure for Measure* out of his copy of the Second Folio.

THE AGE OF SHAKESPEARE AND *Imagining Shakespeare* thus seem to offer a stark choice: if you want your Shakespeare to be edgy and subversive, read Orgel; if you want your Shakespeare to be tame and conventional, read Kermode. In fact, this formulation exaggerates the differences between the two, since at his best Kermode does not ignore the complexities and deeper meanings in Shakespeare, and at his worst Orgel ends up merely reading the conventional ideas of our day back into Shakespeare. Both books have their strong points and their weak points. Orgel's is the more uneven performance and the gap between his best and his worst moments is greater. But both works are worth reading, with *The Age of Shakespeare* being more likely to satisfy the general reader and *Imagining Shakespeare* more likely to appeal to the specialist. And, as always, Shakespeare's ability to provoke this variety of thoughtful responses is one measure of his enduring greatness.

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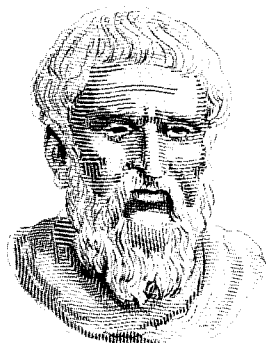
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Book Review by Mark Blitz

FROM THE TOP

The Music of the Republic: Essays on Socrates' Conversations and Plato's Writings,
by Eva Brann. Paul Dry Books, 320 pages, \$24.95



PLATO IS LESS IMPORTANT THAN HE WAS a hundred years ago. Democratic higher education, relativism, historicism, multiculturalism, laziness, and love of novelty have all taken their toll. There are more significant things to consider than the irrelevant, antidemocratic, or foolishly dogmatic writings of dead Greeks.

Plato also is more important, however, because the few who do read him take him seriously philosophically, not just culturally, and seek his (and Aristotle's) moral and political guidance. He is not imbibed as part of a casual cocktail of teachings that support quasi-aristocratic habits, but instead, is examined for guidance in supporting what is worthwhile in liberalism.

We therefore study Plato's works more carefully than we did a generation or two ago. Then it was difficult to find good translations. Now almost every dialogue has been translated well. Then many scholars learned Greek, but why they sought and suffered their learning was a question with no compelling answer. Now more of the few who bother to learn Greek do so to read Aristotle and Plato with care. Then little intelligent was written about most of the dialogues, although useful Greek editions and a few decent general accounts did exist. Now there are good articles or books on most dialogues and several interesting discussions of particular arguments.

The increase in philosophic and political attention is caused by several factors, chief among them the influence of Leo Strauss and Jacob Klein. Strauss guided several outstanding students of Plato—Seth Benardete, Allan Bloom, and Joseph Cropsey among others—who themselves encouraged serious education at Chicago and other schools. Klein developed the classic liberal education of St. John's College. Among his students none is more outstanding than

Eva Brann, a tutor at St. John's for half-a-century and Dean for eight years. Of the students of Strauss and Klein only Benardete rivals her combination of classical scholarship and philosophic acumen.

The Music of the Republic gathers in one place Ms. Brann's papers and lectures on Plato. It begins with two on the *Phaedo*, turns to one each on the *Apology* and *Charmides*, follows with four on the *Republic*, including the monograph-length title essay, and concludes with one on the *Timaeus*, three on the *Sophist*, and essays on Plato's ideas and on teaching him to undergraduates. The fourteen pieces are subtly organized so that, for example, the first and last, fourth and eleventh and so on especially illuminate each other.

Brann's work is distinguished by clarity about difficult matters. She does not indulge in riddles or obscurities, allowing Plato's own difficulty to present itself and conceiving her task to be helping us directly to understand what he is arguing. She does not dazzle like a magician one never will be skilled enough to imitate, but seduces through the illusion that one can rise to her level. She attracts the reader and student more through surprise at the familiar than through bewilderment at the mysterious. She therefore offers more or less authoritative summaries of the *Phaedo* and *Sophist* (reprinted introductions to these dialogues that she wrote with her co-translators Peter Kalkavage and Eric Salem) and clear analyses of the divided line, the Good, Nonbeing, and similar matters. Although she advocates teaching Plato to undergraduates by giving "some discreet direction to the subtleties of the text," mostly asking questions but not lecturing, her own works here do not for the most part follow that advice. She rarely dons the mask of the tutor who pretends to believe he knows no more than we do. She says directly what she thinks that Plato or Socrates has in mind and lets us know when she is speculating or guess-

ing. She dedicates the book to Klein "who taught us mostly what we'd always known." This is her own goal: she approaches it not through coy winks, nudges, and hints but with a straightforward display of powerful intelligence and clear and attractive prose. Naturally, this more direct path contains ironies and jokes of its own.

In addition to Brann's clarity and directness her papers display several elements both like and unlike those of other close readers. No essay is a complete commentary in which she tries to say something about each and every word and nuance in the text. The introductions to the *Phaedo* and *Sophist* summarize the dialogues and divide them into sections. The essay on the *Charmides* follows the dialogue's order from beginning to end. The "Music of the Republic" discusses and diagrams the *Republic's* overall structure and examines and summarizes the divided line and cave images with great and brilliant care. In no case, however, does Brann offer a word-for-word commentary even on a small section.

She is of course alert to the issues and opportunities of Plato's dialogue form. She remarks the importance of Socrates' varied conversation partners, the difference between narrated and performed dialogues, Socrates' choice of examples, and similar matters. She discusses the difference between what Socrates intends and says (e.g., in the *Apology*) and points out his irony. She attends carefully to the details of Socratic myths and to their general meaning, using her impressive classical learning to put us in the position of a Socratic contemporary.

Brann's interpretations take all these mechanisms and more into account. Despite this, she doubts that Plato is esoteric, although she discusses at some length the question of his unwritten doctrines about the Good. She sometimes goes outside the text to illuminate its meaning, as in her discussion of the impor-

tance for the *Charmides* of the political careers of Critias and Charmides. She illuminates the central part of the *Republic* by referring to later classic authors: her "secondary" sources are Aristotle, Speusippus, and Plutarch. In general, therefore, her essays are discursive and interpretive, alive to but not hiding behind Plato's devices, concentrating on difficult questions but never obscuring matters, and reaching conclusions or at least making significant general assertions, but not constructing a Platonic doctrine.

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE HERE TO EXAMINE Brann's interpretations in detail, so I will discuss only her major themes. Chief among them is her analysis of images and our power to understand them. An image both is and is not what it pictures. "I think that for Socrates this eikastic power of the soul is the wonder of wonders." The connection between original and image is the final of seven headings under which she considers Plato's ideas. It also is fundamental in her discussion of the *Republic's* imaging of the good through the sun, divided line, and cave.

Images, and things as a whole, display the significance of matters being other than they seem. The significance of Nonbeing in the sense of otherness is a second element in Brann's analyses. It obviously is important to discussions of the *Sophist* where "other" is thematic. It also is basic in understanding the *Republic* and even the *Apology* where "Socrates asserts his ultimate negative wisdom—his knowledge of his ignorance concerning Hades, the realm of death." She examines the *Sophist* in three essays because its subject is so vital generally. "The *Republic* has surely been the dialogue closest to my soul. Yet the dialogue that has given me most to think about is the *Sophist*. It contains what seems to me the third most portentous ancient discovery for philosophy (after Parmenides' revelation of Being and Socrates' hypotheses of the forms): the reinterpretation of Nonbeing as Otherness, which turns out to be indispensable for an understanding of that most fascinating of human abilities—imaging."

A third theme is the importance of mathematics and "philosophical arithmetic," and their connection to dialectic. Brann offers a clear and extensive discussion of Socrates' presentation of this matter in the middle of the *Republic*. She includes a remarkable "diagram picturing the realm of the Divided Line in solids," and connects the order of appearance of the elements of mathematical study to the order of the elements of Socrates' dialectical way. She distinguishes dialectic as "movement of the soul within itself and among the forms" from dialectic as discussion between "a knower and a learner" and "conversation among the many." She elaborates at some length the powers of the Good and the manner

in which it is "a unitary binding source." "In the dialectic progress from 'what each is' to 'what the Good is,' the latter is revealed as the order of the whole and thus as the pattern of all political community." The Good, however, is "complemented... by a secondary 'dyadic' or doubling source." "Human ignorance and its consequence, badness, as well as their management, which is called politics" belong in this realm of Nonbeing that Socrates presents in his cave image in the *Republic*. This secondary principle, however, is bad only when "not involved in the order of Being." When we consider images and otherness carefully we see that Nonbeing "turns out to bind beings and to enable speech" and to participate "in the generation of the ordered realm of Being."

As I have suggested, Brann presents these naturally heady and dizzying thoughts with a charming clarity to which summary cannot do justice. This clarity is on display in a fourth major theme, Plato's forms or ideas. Each idea is an hypothesis, not in the sense of "a conclusion presented for verification, but a beginning that becomes the end of inquiry." Each enables Socrates "to frame a question that has in it an arrow to an answer." They are "used as stepping stones to their own conversion into something not merely supposed, but truly beheld, 'seen.'" She then explores the idea "under seven headings for it shows as many aspects as there are beginnings to Socrates' inquiry: excellence and commonness; speech and dialectic; answers and questions; opinion and knowledge; appearance and Being; same and other; original and image." Her discussions under these headings are as intelligent an introduction to the ideas as one will find.

Brann originally presented her lecture on the ideas as a response to Klein's death. We must now "boldly plough ahead" and not postpone "bald confrontation of [our] own with the ultimate philosophical matters," she writes. For as Socrates advises in the *Phaedo*, philosophy need not disappear when he is gone. Many, perhaps even we ourselves, can "charm away" the fear that "philosophy is impossible once he is dead."

THE FINAL THEME I WILL ADDRESS IS Brann's attention to the possibility or continuation of philosophy, or the political-philosophical problem. She treats this question largely in terms of liberal, intellectual, or "music" education that recognizes and therefore still allows ascent from images, contradictions, and perplexities. Her analysis of the *Phaedo* is governed by her list of the "unfinished teachings, the legacy of aporiai that Socrates... bequeaths... to us." The fact of these seventeen questions permits, although it does not guarantee, that some will be stirred to thought.

Brann discusses less fully the challenge presented by the more directly legal or compulsory relation of the political community to philosophy. She does address this challenge, however, primarily in essays on the *Apology*, *Charmides* and justice in the *Republic*. Moreover, although most on her list of seventeen questions are not obviously moral or political, some—the penalties or rewards for pleasure and thought, moral choice versus mechanistic explanation, and, especially, whether "the way a human being lives and acts" is "incidental or essential to the trustworthiness of his philosophy"—clearly are. Brann recognizes that "when philosophy comes upon the city it comes as a negation and a threat." "Plato... is recording [in the *Apology*] something he has heard in court.... He has heard that Socrates' activity is publicly indefensible." He writes the *Apology* to protect us against "facile vindication of Socrates' way" just as he writes other dialogues to "prevent the learned ossification of thought." He means to "provide a permanent possibility of the renewal" of thought while reminding us of enlightenment's danger to the city.

Notwithstanding this analysis, Brann does not discuss the variety of political regimes and the attraction of the arts, statesmanship, or love, very much in their own terms. Her concern is more with the deed of education, with learning to speak or to see what is invisible, as it were, than with the apparent freedom, singularity, and perfection of ordinary embodiments and happiness, and the path that leads from them to thought. She distinguishes the *Republic's* embodied soul (the familiar *eros*, spirit, and *logos*) from its intellectual soul (the four ways of knowing described in the divided line) without, perhaps, persuasively reconnecting them. In her discussion of the *Charmides* she ties Critias' wish to have a single knowledge that could know all other types of knowing to modern ideological tyranny. One wonders, however, whether the motives and practices of tyranny can sufficiently be captured this way; or indeed, whether in general the intellectual cause in human affairs—intellectual satisfaction, dissatisfaction, completion and imperfection—does not appear too dominant in the book.

Our impression of Brann's approach to the political-philosophical problem might be different, of course, had she chosen more often in these essays to develop Plato's arguments from ordinary satisfactions and illusions up to philosophy and its objects, rather than from the top down. In any event, the reader is not likely to find a better guide to Plato or to the matters he studied. We take heart both from Ms. Brann's work and from her example.

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Book Review by Catherine Zuckert

PLATO'S POETRY

Exiling the Poets: The Production of Censorship in Plato's Republic,
by Ramona A. Naddaff. University of Chicago Press, 204 pages, \$27.50



RAMONA NADDAFF'S READING OF Plato's *Republic* explicitly challenges two simple but nevertheless common, and therefore powerful, objections to the treatment of poetry in this dialogue. First, there is the liberal objection virtually every teacher of the *Republic* encounters from one or more students: Socrates advocates censorship of poetry, and censorship is bad. Socrates and his proposals for the reform of the "feverish" unjust city are therefore also bad. Naddaff, a professor in the Department of Rhetoric at University of California, Berkeley, agrees with these critics that censorship should be decried. Nevertheless, she points out, Socrates' treatment of poetry in Books 2-3 of the *Republic* recognizes the power of poetic discourse to shape the characters (or souls) of those who listen to it, as liberal toleration of every form of speech does not. In "disciplining" that power by expunging all the elements that work against the inculcation of the virtues of courage and moderation in the guardians, Socrates' "censorship" actually results in a purification of Homer that makes epic poetry, better and less ambiguously, serve its traditional aim of fostering the heroic virtues.

Naddaff crosses swords more directly and unqualifiedly with philosophical commentators like Francis Cornford, Benjamin Jowett, Paul Shorey, and Julia Annas, who suggest that the discussion of poetry in Book 10 adds nothing essential to the argument. Rather than an irrelevant addition, she argues, the reincorporation of poetry in the "myth of Er" at the end constitutes a new definition of philosophy. Because it takes a "myth" to arouse the desire that animates and sustains philosophy as a search for wisdom, poetry and

philosophy are necessarily intertwined. After attempting first to restrict and then to negate the power of poetry, Naddaff argues, Socrates finally produces a new form of philosophical-poetic discourse.

Following the course of the conversation in the dialogue, Naddaff identifies three stages or moments in this "production": 1) the purification of poetry in Books 2-3, on the basis of its traditional educative goals and function; 2) the more radical, because more complete, expulsion of poetry in Book 10, when poetry and its power are reconsidered in light of what has been said about the character of the human soul and its relation to the eternal, unchanging truth of the ideas in Books 4-9; and 3) the complete reincorporation of poetry in a new open-ended, dialogical form of philosophy in the final myth of Er. With this "myth," Naddaff concludes, Plato "subverts" his own apparent teaching about the relation between poetry and philosophy by showing that "philosophy is an art of living that requires poetic images and myths." Instead of the passive contemplation of abstract concepts or *theoria*, "philosophy has become what it always was and always should be: a striving to know."

In striving to obtain knowledge, she observes, dialogical "philosophy assumes that there is no answer in advance." Unlike uncensored poetry, such philosophy does assume "that there is something to be known." Such philosophy becomes poetic, however, when it inquires into the ability of language or *logos* to represent what can be known. "All forms of symbolization—poetic, rhetorical, mathematical—are granted a hearing... to see whether they propel

philosophy forward in its quest to cultivate the desire to know and to represent this knowledge and desire." At the end of the *Republic*, readers thus see that "poetic myth... satisfies the philosopher's need to keep his desire for absolute philosophical knowledge alive and urgent, even if ultimately impossible and illusory."

LIKE NIETZSCHE, NADDAFF EMPHASIZES the contest or *agon* between poetry and philosophy in the *Republic*. Unlike Nietzsche in *Birth of Tragedy*, however, Naddaff does not seem to see the way in which Plato has made poetry subservient to philosophy, the way philosophy itself later becomes auxiliary to theology. Although she suggests that by the end of the *Republic*, Plato has, in effect, transformed philosophy into a form of poetry, she does not pay attention to the "poetic" characteristics of Plato's own work. She does not account for the characterizations of Socrates' interlocutors, the action of the dialogue, or the fact that "Plato's" primary "philosophical" teachings about the ideas are explicitly presented in Books 6 and 7 in the form of poetic images. (If she had, she would not have been able to restrict her analysis primarily to the three "moments" or argue for a Hegel-like synthesis of poetry and philosophy *only* at the end.) Following Foucault, she emphasizes the way in which the attempt to repress, if not control, poetry results in the "production" of a new kind of poetry (if not knowledge). But, in contrast to Foucault, she seems to ignore the political implications of the "production" she describes. Although she recognizes, as almost any reader of the *Republic* would, that poetry is explicitly judged on the basis of its power to

shape (or reform) the psyches of the "citizens" (or subjects) of the city, she remains curiously silent about the obviously political context in which Plato presents the "ancient quarrel" between philosophy and poetry.

Naddaff shows that the relation between philosophy and poetry in the *Republic* is much more complex than either the liberal or the philosophical critics have admitted, but her contribution to Platonic scholarship is limited by the fact that she treats the "ancient quarrel" almost entirely in terms of "discourse." Apparently believing (like the "uncensored poets") that there is nothing outside or beyond words, she fails to identify or address the substantive content of the conflict between Socrates and Homer. As a result, her analysis of the differences between poetry and philosophy and of their final conjunction remains fundamentally formal and, consequently, empty.

As Naddaff sees (though through a glass darkly), the quarrel between the poets and philosophers presented in the *Republic* ultimately has to do with the significance of human mortality or death. She recognizes that the "myth of Er" constitutes a kind of re-telling (or re-writing) of the tale Odysseus tells King Alcinoos about his trip to Hades, but she does not even ask about the differences between Homer's account and Socrates' substitution, much less explore the significance of those differences.

NEVERTHELESS, THESE DIFFERENCES are important. In Homer, death is shown to be horrible. Odysseus talks to *psychai* in Hades, but these souls are able to converse only after he has given them blood to drink. As "shades," they do not appear to be able to think or communicate with others. Minos is said to be judge, and some souls (of tyrants like Tantalus and Sisyphus) are shown to be suffering unending punishments. Only Heracles appears to have been rewarded with an immortal life with the gods on Olympus. There is no suggestion of reincarnation or rebirth.

In the "myth of Er," souls are first judged, rewarded or punished, and then brought to a field where they can contemplate the intelligible order and beauty of the cosmos—the orbits of the planets and the resultant harmony of the spheres. Although the three "fates," said to be daughters of necessity, keep the spheres in motion, they merely seal the choices the individual souls make concerning their future lives. Neither the gods nor the intelligible order of nature determines the shape and outcome of

human lives. On the contrary, individual souls choose the form of their future life on the basis of what they have learned or failed to learn, what they have cherished or hated, in their previous existence. According to the "myth of Er," both the learning and the rewards thus take place in this life, not the next. Both the learning and the results are, moreover, the individual's own responsibility.

At the end of his myth, Er reports: "By chance Odysseus' soul had drawn the last lot." Nevertheless, "from memory of its former labors, it had recovered from love of honor, so it looked for a long time for the life of a private man who minds his own business, and with effort found one." Despite the differences between the two accounts of Hades, at the end of Er's myth it thus looks as though Homer and Socrates fundamentally agree. The hero of the *Odyssey* had learned through his travels to be just, as Socrates and his interlocutors had defined justice.

Homer shows that Odysseus, by going to Hades, had learned that the most important thing in human life is the sympathetic understanding of another. Rather than accept the nymph Calpyso's invitation to live with her in sexual ecstasy forever, a chastened Odysseus chose to return to his mortal wife Penelope. He did not return to Ithaca merely to be reunited with his family, however. He also tried to take vengeance on the young men who had tried to supplant him. He would have destroyed the entire population of Ithaca in a civil war, if Athena had not stopped him. Socrates, in the myth he relates, introduces a new understanding of justice with a basis in a rational order and drops any reference to Odysseus' desire for revenge or the need for the gods to restrain it.

Naddaff does not pay attention to what Socrates retained or dropped from Homer's tale, because she reads Homer more traditionally than Plato did. In Homer she sees only the praise of the heroic virtues. In commenting on Socrates' censorship of Homer in Book 3 of the *Republic*, she thus describes Achilles simply in terms of the alternatives Zeus gave to his mother: either he will die young and become famous or he will live longer, but obscurely. Naddaff does not observe that in Book 9 of the *Iliad* Achilles emphatically states that no honor or wealth can compensate for the loss of his life. He therefore plans to withdraw from the battle and go home to live in obscurity—until Hector kills his beloved Patroclus. Achilles then changes his mind. He re-enters the battle, knowing that he will lose his life. He does so

not to seek glory, however, but to avenge his friend. But Achilles cannot find satisfaction in relentlessly torturing Hector's corpse. Instead of simply praising the heroic quest for honor, as Naddaff (like many other readers) seems to think, in both his epics Homer shows that the most precious thing in human life is the understanding and loyal affection of others. Because that understanding and affection are rooted in a shared, distinctively human experience of living in the face of our own inevitable death, the immortal gods do not have and cannot provide it. But the same knowledge of the inevitability of human death that makes us cherish our loved ones while they last also gives rise to rage and despair. There is nothing that can compensate us for our inescapable losses. Both of Homer's heroes are thus shown trying to achieve justice by wreaking unlimited vengeance on those who have wronged them. Order is restored in both poems only by a *deus ex machina*.

In his "myth of Er" Socrates thus points both to a deeper reading of Homer than is usually given and to an even deeper disagreement with the epic poet. Socrates does not censor the parts of Homer's poems that show death to be terrible or that display heroes acting immoderately, merely because these scenes provide the future guardians with undesirable models of behavior. He attempts to show that the poets are *wrong* when they suggest that there is nothing lasting, eternal, or intelligible in human existence. Explicitly admitting that human beings are mortal and therefore imperfect, Socrates nevertheless insists that real improvement in human life is possible, but only if human beings can discover some eternally unchanging, intelligible principles to guide them. It is not possible to satisfy "the philosopher's need to keep his desire for absolute philosophical knowledge alive and urgent," any more than it is possible to establish a just political order on the basis of a "myth," if the mythical form of the discourse indicates, as Naddaff suggests, that the satisfaction of the philosopher's desire for knowledge is "ultimately impossible and illusory." The "ancient quarrel" between the philosophers and the poets is not a matter merely of form or "discourse": it concerns the character and meaning of human life and death.

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LES INTELLECTUELS

Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and the Quarrel that Ended It, by Ronald Aronson.
The University of Chicago Press, 291 pages, \$32.50 (cloth), \$19 (paper)

A RECURRENT CHARACTERISTIC OF MODERN Western culture is our evident need to bring together pairs of authors and to form linkages between them. Luther and Erasmus, Voltaire and Rousseau, Turgenev and Dostoyevsky, Sartre and Camus—in their time and continuously down to ours, “you can’t have one without the other.”

Such associations are complicated by the fact that the “and” between the names is more adversarial than copulative, enforcing a separation as much as a conjunction, a divergence within a conjunction. Each of these cross-rivalries or “dualisms,” certainly the most notable and exemplary of their epochs, contains difference, a difference that is real and symbolic, radical and far-reaching. Whether we approve or not, whether we like it or not, difference will find its way and will inevitably come to expression. Dispute is pandemic, and there is never a peace: Polemos rules, as Heraclitus says. But as Dostoyevsky reminds us, polemics lead to clarification. So it is in each of the cross-rivalries mentioned above: the tangled fates and fortunes of the paired authors, their own particular itineraries of encounter, led to remarkable formulations and clarifications that involved not only themselves but their entire societies. They were cast together, pitted against each other, as preeminent and representative figures in periods of profound intellectual ferment and social change.

At one level, such dualisms attract because they have a marvelous story to tell (in the book under review, Ronald Aronson calls the Sartre-Camus dualism “riveting”—and so it is). Their interactions could well constitute a five-act drama. But beyond such ample, storied interest the study of such dualisms has current value because they present a new model of how ideas are produced, one that goes beyond the valuable history of ideas and insists on the pertinent intervention of other qualities—the emotions, temperament, all those things that enter into the make-up of the fully-developed, thinking human being. One does not live and work alone; there are intersection points with others. More dramatically, we write against figures leaning over our shoulders, faces in the mind, words that strike and stick. In these particular dualisms, such interchange is constant and complex, and inextricably merging with the dominant issues of the day, the crucial turning points of a culture

in a time of crisis. These dualisms represent a startling blend of private and public.

In his remarkable book, *CamusSartre* (as the device on the cover has it), Ronald Aronson has all these points right, and more besides. His thoughtful work is a classic of the genre, assuming a place of honor alongside, for example, Heinrich Bornkamm’s essay, “Erasmus oder Luther.” Henri Gouhier’s magisterial study, *Rousseau et Voltaire: Portraits dans Deux Miroirs* (1983), and N.F. Budanova’s *Dostoyevsky and Turgenev: A Creative Dialogue* (1987, my translation). Aronson’s study is fully detailed, benefiting from much of the new work in the 1990s on both Camus and Sartre, always fair-minded, and yet unflinching in its critical judgments.

Such hallmark studies as these are not produced by advocates nor are they written for ecumenicists. We are not dealing with love affairs *manquées*, nor “chance meetings,” nor more simply with the falling out of friends (as the publisher’s subtitle would seem to indicate). These are sustained stories of grand collision courses. As Simone de Beauvoir herself wrote of Sartre and Camus, “the final quarrel between [them] was simply the final moment of a long disagreement.”

YET, LIKE THE OTHER PAIRS, CAMUS AND Sartre at first were joined together in great causes, comrades-in-arms in the vanguard of the progressive intellectual movements of their day. They seemed to share genuine affinities. Too often unremarked, they were both, as was typical of so many of their age, children who had lost fathers, a generation, as it were, self-born. The belief that one has the freedom to make oneself anew out of an absurd situation arose almost as a natural element of their thought (however fully qualified in Camus’s later development). In this vacuum of a truly “lost generation,” they moved into the center of French intellectual life quite easily, and each achieved an early frothy fame—usually with their names in tandem. They held sway by their broad appeal: each was a novelist, a playwright, and a philosopher. Each became a public intellectual, in his works not only addressing the most pertinent issues of the day, but also embodying a certain way of life, which would affect an entire generation. They were “existentialists”—though against the name and the shared

honor Camus would later recoil.

But as Aronson remarks acutely, and as Cain and Abel testify, kinship is not sameness. In fact, behind these apparent grand alliances there existed serious fissures over background, temperament, and intellectual approach. Camus came from a family so impoverished even Christianity did not penetrate—*Cristo si e fermato a Eboli*. Yet he grew up in an atmosphere of street-life freedom, happy with his chums, possessed of athletic skills as well as personal charm and good looks (later Bogartesque, with that inevitable cigarette dangling roguishly). Coming from the proletariat he suffered no sentimental nostalgia to be a proletarian, although he remained a syndicalist throughout his life. Sartre, on the other hand, as he tells us in his literary masterpiece, *Les Mots*, was raised by women, sequestered, and knew little of the street life, or the companionship of pals. His family members were the Protestant heirs of Voltaire, cultivating an upper-crust, self-contented Protestantism without protest. Brimming with intellectual self-confidence, a birthright as it were, he gained entrance into the highest intellectual cockpit of his day, the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*. No wonder, as he was later to declare, his friendship with Camus was not an easy one. A kind of wariness prevailed, which prevented their frequent meeting from turning into closeness, as if there were areas that were shut off. Later, this would include politics. But Sartre always wrote condescendingly of Camus’s dearth of training in so-called technical philosophy—a criticism that even some sympathetic to Camus have swallowed. Well aware of their differences, Camus was more willing to attribute them to the gap between an intuitive, instinctive intelligence and a critical one.

There were other differences. Very early Camus was engaged in political life and for a short time a member of the Communist Party. He also made personal journeys into the Kabylie and wrote searing reports about the miseries and deprivations of the Arab population under colonialism. At the same time Sartre was largely disengaged. He spent 1933-34 in Germany without any apparent apprehension about Hitler and, despite his appropriate sympathies, was content to be a spectator of the Spanish Civil War. What for Camus had been

part of his early adulthood—engagement, commitment, full appreciation and involvement in the life of the people—was to become for Sartre an intellectual and personal acquisition. It was he who underwent something like a “conversion” experience. It was he who needed to be a man among men, to create a solidarity with the working class. More and more he required that his thought be brought into connection with his life. Perhaps it was his Protestant tradition that impelled him to this unity, lest he experience “bad faith”—that curious expression. The presence of such personal needs and drives helps explain why Louis Althusser was able to call Sartre “our” Rousseau.

WHEREAS SARTRE MOVED TOWARD unity, Camus was able to live in contradiction. A reviewer in the *New York Times Book Review* a few years ago faulted Camus for being one of those “destroyed” because they could not take an unequivocal stance. Alexander Nehamas correctly responded that a sense of complexity, a responsiveness to several proper constraints (not to all points of view), can be the most productive way of acting, and is no bar to having a position: it is simply refusing to be limited by an either/or proposition.

As Coleridge was fond of saying, such unlikes must soon lead to dislikes. The dualism between Sartre and Camus (Camus was irked that in the coupling of their names, his was always second, even as he objected to being thought a “satellite” member of Sartre’s *famille*), like the other great dualisms, was an “in-house” quarrel. Their very shared affinities contributed to the later conflagration, to the warfare that became generalized, cosmic. Arthur Koestler, who figured so centrally in the political break between the two, wrote that the quarrel of the future would be between Communists and ex-Communists, or as we might say, between liberals and neocons. Aronson quotes Camus to this effect: “The struggle between the free Left and the progressive Left is the essential problem of our movement.”

This also means that their dialogue is creative (to borrow Budanova’s subtitle), dominated by “inter-responsiveness.” Even after the break, especially after their break, Sartre and Camus continued to address each other through their works. Here Aronson is especially good as he uncovers the “coded” messages, the *cryptophasis*, with which they carried on their dispute, leading up to a brilliant analysis of Camus’s last masterpiece, *The Fall*. The difference between dualisms and the falling out of friends is that friends may reconcile: Rousseau restored his relationship with Diderot, Turgenev with Tolstoy, and Sartre with Merleau-Ponty. But with figures involved in a great dualism, the

division is “unending,” as Budanova argues was the case with Turgenev and Dostoyevsky. Down to the very end intellectual enmity figures in response.

At the 20th-century’s midpoint, these looming differences broke out into open warfare over Camus’s *Man in Revolt* (Aronson’s preferred translation in place of *The Rebel*) and the review in Sartre’s *Les Temps modernes*, with subsequent rejoinders by Camus and Sartre himself. This was the explosive moment in a relationship that had begun much earlier, quite coincidentally and on terms of mutual respect. In 1938 Camus, a young provincial intellectual, had reviewed in short order Sartre’s *Nausea* and *The Wall*, praising each work, commending their author, but



also pinpointing some deficiencies in *Nausea*—for instance, its episodic nature, its lack of a cohesive aesthetic form or controlling mythos. On his part, writing in the early ’40s, Sartre found a sympathetic absurdist colleague in the author of *The Stranger* and *The Myth of Sisyphus*, insightfully describing Camus as a moralist of the 18th century, another Voltaire. He did have some reservations about Camus’s actual familiarity with the philosophers he discussed, causing Camus to complain privately about Sartre’s “acidity.”

THEY DID NOT MEET UNTIL 1943, WHEN they became regular members of a talented and fun-loving group of playgoers, party-givers, and activist intellectuals. They continued to write and publish under the Occupation, and Sartre in particular looked back to those years with some nostalgia. In fact, the end of the Occupation fractured the Left’s unity; their divided attitudes and projections

about the future began to reveal their true differences.

Aronson discusses evenhandedly but critically the reasons for the break: Camus’s refusal to turn a blind eye to the USSR’s totalitarian despotism; Sartre’s bilious anti-anti-Communism (“every anti-communist is a dog”); his penchant for violence, at first as a means of countering the allegedly systematic violence of the West, and then as a means of colonial liberation. In the beginning, after the debate in the pages of *Les Temps modernes*, Camus felt outvoted, ostracized, silenced. Curiously enough, Aronson detects a tandem fall into silence on Sartre’s part, as though their rupture had a “twin” effect.

With his final position of determined silence about the war in Algeria, Camus only felt further estranged from French intellectual life. After all, some twenty years earlier had he not outlined a program of social and economic assimilation between the French and Algerians which, if followed, would have prevented the accelerating violence? And in the event of such violence, had he not accurately foretold the triumph of a kind of Islamic fundamentalism? He broke this silence in *The Fall*, and here Aronson shows superbly how Camus in the voice of Clamence skewers the arguments against him in the pages of *Les Temps modernes*, creating a genuine “hero of our time,” one duly situated in the lowest circle of Hell. But neither does he spare himself, attributing to Clamence many of his own failings and mistakes. This short novel represents a signal triumph of creative endeavor, a breakthrough of enormous proportions, one indeed that was acknowledged by Sartre, who with his genius of recognition, called it a masterpiece.

Camus was killed in an automobile accident in early January 1960; Sartre outlived him by some twenty years, only to see himself bypassed by the generation of ’68. Yet today their argument seems as pertinent as ever. Following the interludes of structuralism and post-structuralism, as the brilliant writer Jose-Guilherme Merquior in his *From Prague to Paris* (1987) has argued, they returned in full force, Sartre as the last totalizing French intellectual, armed with wrath against Anglo-American hegemony; and Camus as the latest in a long line of French moralists, who believe there is a capacity for moral judgment outside the strict laws of historical necessity, and who do not mind being right, even if that places them in a minority.

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Book Review by James Panero

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

Humanism and Democratic Criticism, by Edward W. Said.
Columbia University Press, 154 pages, \$19.95



IN NOVEMBER 1993, THE NEW YORK TIMES Magazine featured a remarkably unprecise essay by Edward Said titled "The Phony Islamic Threat." He charged the media, government bureaucrats, and Middle East experts with conjuring an Islamic bogeyman to demonize at home and abroad. Coming only a few months after the first attack on the World Trade Center, the piece dismissed all talk of an Islamist threat as a reflection of American prejudice and insecurity. Then, in the 1997 revised edition of his book *Covering Islam*, Said ridiculed "speculations about the latest conspiracy to blow up buildings, sabotage commercial airlines," as inventions of racist Westerners.

Since the publication of *Orientalism* in 1978, Said's theories on the interaction of Islam and the West have become dominant—one might say hegemonic—in the academy. He refashioned postmodernism into something called postcolonialism. Armed with the nebulous "deconstruction" theory of Michel Foucault, he seized a narrow canon of literature and enlisted it in the service of political advocacy; in his case, on the Palestinians' behalf. For over two decades he identified with this group, championing its cause at every turn, flacking it in every paper, ceaselessly hewing to Yasser Arafat's line, even serving as a Palestinian governor-in-exile in New York.

Before cancer took his life in September 2003, the University Professor in English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University fired some parting shots; *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* is one of them. For the most part, it is not an enjoyable read. The volume recasts four lectures given at Cambridge University in October and November 2002 (not 2003 as the book says), and an earlier essay on "The Public Role of Writers and Intellectuals."

Yet for a précis of Said's thought and style, one could do worse. At only 154 pages, it is remarkably dense, packed with the literary criticism, petty self-pity, grandstanding, and the quick-tempered excoriation of enemies that made the "dispossessed" professor a favored guest on "The Charlie Rose Show," NPR, and media throughout the world. If the results are uneven and repetitive, one must make some allowances—this was a book produced on borrowed time.

Said's fame and infamy stem from his insistence on transmuting scholarship into political activism. In his foreword, Akeel Bilgrami admits that the literature professor's "intellectual legacy will be primarily political.... This is inevitable and it is perhaps how it should be." Said was the willful antithesis of the disinterested scholar, and nowhere is this more apparent than in this book. *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* is not about Israelis and Palestinians, or Islam and the West, or "the humanities" in any serious sense. It is Said's blueprint for a new pedagogy, the likes of which could not have been imagined by the Columbia scholars he invokes—Mark van Doren, Jacques Barzun, F.W. Dupee, Meyer Shapiro, and Lionel Trilling. Post-9/11, politics have become total. This is Said's exhortation from beyond the grave: Develop a form of humanism that amounts to "stubborn, and secular, intellectual resistance." Read: politicize. The classroom is the battleground, the lectern is the soapbox, and the instructor is a committed agent of social change. This is the responsibility of the engaged intellectual.

THERE ARE INCREDIBLY TEDIOUS moments in this book, which begins with Said's ritual invocation: "I grew up in a non-Western culture, and, as someone who is

amphibious or bicultural, I am especially aware, I think, of perspectives and traditions other than those commonly thought of as uniquely American or 'Western.'" The implication, of course, is that this qualification furnishes him with unique insight superior to that of the prejudiced Western scholars he made a career of denouncing.

Score-settling was high on Said's to-do list. Lynne Cheney, Dinesh D'Souza, and Roger Kimball are blasted as "irate traditionalists or callow polemicists." Allan Bloom suffers from "dyspepsia of tone." Harold Bloom makes "tiresome vatic trumpetings." William Bennett employs "thumping oratory." Samuel Huntington developed a "deplorably vulgar and reductive thesis of the clash of civilizations." Bernard Lewis is a "discredited old Orientalist." Saul Bellow is racist, evidenced by a passage from *Mr. Sammler's Planet*. The hitlist extends to T.S. Eliot, the Agrarians, The New Critics, Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More, and Matthew Arnold, the progenitor of what Said calls "Arnoldianism."

Not even his privileged upbringing, fame, television appearances, an endowed professorship at Columbia, and years of accolades and publications succeeded in giving the lie to Said's own identification as "dispossessed." Christopher Hitchens, an old friend and co-author of *Blaming the Victims* (1998), confessed in *Slate* soon after Said's death that "Edward had a slight tendency to self-pity, and the same chord was struck even in the best of his literary work, which often expressed a too-highly developed sense of injury and victimhood."

To many readers, these contradictions only made Said's public persona more attractive. This book is packed with odd moments, and



often Said's exile-on-Main Street grows downright comical. Here is one example: "True, it is a considerable disadvantage to realize that one is unlikely to get asked on to PBS's NewsHour or ABC's Nightline or, if one is in fact asked, only an isolated fugitive minute will be offered." In another strange moment, Said writes, "In far too many years of appearing on television or being interviewed by journalists, I have never *not* been asked the question, 'what do you think the United States should do about such and such an issue?'... It has been a point of principle for me *not ever* to reply to the question." This, despite a lifetime of telling the U.S. what to do in op-ed pages, radio programs, and television talk shows.

SOME OF SAID'S DETRACTORS ON THE Left were outraged by his support for the "Great Books" and Columbia's "core curriculum." But for Said, the classics need not be avoided, just reinterpreted. This is the secret message of his humanism and "return to philology." He says flatly: "Humanism is not about

withdrawal and exclusion. Quite the reverse: its purpose is to make more things available to critical scrutiny as the product of human labor, human energies for emancipation and enlightenment, and, just as importantly, human misreadings and misinterpretations of the collective past and present. There was never a misinterpretation that could not be revised, improved, or overturned."

Said's concept of a "new humanistic practice" is not original. For over a decade, students have been grappling with the mandarin mores of studying great literature in the academy. He is correct when he writes that "the new generation of humanist scholars is more attuned than any before it to the non-European, genderized, decolonized, and decentered energies and currents of our time." They have little choice. One reads Jane Austen, for example, to comprehend her legitimization of colonialism—an argument Said put forward in his book *Culture and Imperialism*. I can imagine an analogous situation fifty years ago in the storerooms of the Hermitage Museum: "What colors. What elegance. What

a capitalist trickster, this Matisse!"

Said's efforts to unify instruction and advocacy have borne fruit. In spring 2002, a UC Berkeley instructor inserted in the description of his English class, "The Politics and Poetics of Palestinian Resistance," the following caveat: "Conservative thinkers are encouraged to seek other sections." Far from being an anomaly, this sort of activist intolerance is common practice in classrooms countrywide. The Berkeley instructor's mistake was simply to make the unsaid explicit, exposing it to the protests of university trustees and the "conservative media." Both sides were hardened by the exchange.

Said writes that "reading involves the contemporary humanist in two very crucial notions that I shall call reception and resistance." Undoubtedly, reception and resistance are the codewords for the next round of the culture wars, part and parcel of the legacy of Edward Said.

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Book Review by Jean Bethke Elshtain

PRACTICE DOES NOT MAKE PERFECT

Democracy and Tradition, by Jeffrey Stout.
Princeton University Press, 368 pages, \$35

THIS BOOK IS SO FULL OF INTERESTING, challenging, and generous arguments and interpretations, one feels almost churlish in criticizing it, even in part. So it is fitting to turn, first, to the general contours of Stout's argument and its many praiseworthy elements.

Although he spills a good deal of ink on the philosophic problems of democracy, democracy is not, for Stout, reducible to a philosophic problem. Too many liberal political philosophers have been seduced by the work of the late John Rawls into thinking that, if you get the philosophic architecture right, you will somehow have captured the essence of democracy. Not so, avers Stout. Democracy is also a culture and, as such, is riddled with complexities, tensions, nuances, and ambivalences that a philosophic structure, especially one of the Kantian sort, can only distort rather than clarify.

Stout thus positions himself against one of the major contenders in the arena of democratic debate—the Rawlsian notion of what a just liberal democracy must be. But he frets as well about proclaimed alternatives, especially those that look to religion "as a source of civic

unity." Seeking a "unifying framework" for modern democracy, these anti-liberal thinkers—Stanley Hauerwas, Alasdair MacIntyre, and John Milbank—present the strongest case for what Stout calls "the new traditionalism." The Rawlsians play right into the hands of their critics, in two ways: (1) They "have endorsed a theory of the modern nation-state as ideally neutral with respect to comprehensive conceptions of the good"; and (2) they "have proposed to establish political deliberation on a common basis of free public reason, independent of reliance on tradition."

This suffices for the traditionalists to pounce; but Stout thinks they make a mistake in doing so, for, in the process, they take the arguments of liberal philosophy for the thing itself—for modern democracy in all its gritty reality—and then proceed to denounce it.

Stout's purpose, after he spends the bulk of his book "deconstructing" both the dominant liberal position and the stance of the "new traditionalists," is to mount a different defense of democracy. Rather than drawing on Locke or Rawls, he looks to democratic practices as themselves constituting a tradition worth endorsing. Modern democratic culture is no naked public

square. To the contrary, Stout insists, it is "anything but empty. Its ethical substance . . . is more a matter of enduring attitudes, concerns, dispositions and patterns of conduct . . ."; therefore, "Rawlsian liberalism should not be seen as its official mouthpiece." Democracy in this sense *needs* defending, because it is neither the vacuous, pernicious thing its traditionalist critics claim, nor does it conform to the determinant "system of rules or principles" advertised by its liberal defenders.

We—contemporary observers of American democracy—do indeed require a robust defense of a public philosophy, but in order to assay this task we had best look at the "ethical inheritance" of democratic citizens themselves. Stout calls this a "pragmatic conception of democratic sociality," and his book rises or falls, in part, on how compelling this alternative is. By pragmatism Stout means ways of thinking and talking, especially about ethics, but also about the activity of "intellectuals who attempt to make sense of that thinking and talking from a reflective, critical point of view." But democracy isn't just talk—it is also habits, or as Stout prefers, "practices." And the American character can be best understood by looking at our traditional

sources of piety, hope, and generosity.

It makes sense, then, that *Democracy and Tradition*, in Part One, takes up the “question of character,” as Stout invokes thinkers on whom he will rely to make his positive case: Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and John Dewey. He embraces an expressivist conception of norms (e.g., “stealing is wrong” means “I dislike stealing”), drawing on Dewey, but he insists that this leaves room for ethical discourse involving full-fledged truth claims. Stout is never anything less than intelligent and illuminating in his discussion of the American character and our views of race and nation. But a question occurs immediately and haunts Stout’s project, and that is whether Whitman and Emerson and Dewey can sustain the critical and the constructive weight that Stout places on their shoulders.

In Part Two, Stout looks at what, for him, is the ambivalent legacy of “religious voices in a secular society.” Some, of course, would cavil at his characterization of American society as “secular.” One can have a secular government—in the sense of no established religion—without having a thoroughly secularized society. But be that as it may, in this section Stout looks at the conflict between secularist and traditionalist interpretations of American political culture. He appreciates why secularism, as an ideology, gets the dander up of thinkers like Hauerwas, MacIntyre, and Milbank. There are reasons why even a feature of our polity regarded as one of its most noble—freedom of religion—might be interpreted by some as a “ruse designed to reduce religion to insignificance.”

But over the long run the traditionalist insistence that free exercise is but one sham among many not only fuels radical anti-liberalism, it also undermines commitment to democracy. This is one of Stout’s most consistently expressed worries. How long before the “traditionalist backlash against contractarian liberalism” becomes more generalized as an attack on democratic practices *tout court*, of the sort Hauerwas and others have mounted?

Stout is exemplary in his charitable yet pointed interpretation of the traditionalists, especially of Hauerwas, for whom he expresses some admiration. But he questions whether Hauerwas’s critique “of liberal democracy exemplifies the ideals of Christian charity and Aristotelian friendship that he himself embraces as alternatives to contractarian liberalism.” Our political culture is a far nobler thing, Stout insists, than either its Rawlsian defenders or its Hauerwasian detractors declare it to be: they both fall short of the mark. Stout once again

reminds the reader that there are “spiritual benefits” to be derived from “expressive freedom” of the sort that sustains “democratic individuality as a positive good”—this against both camps. This expressivist vision rejects the notion that religion is always a conversation-stopper (the Rawlsians) or, alternatively, the only repository of truths worth believing (the traditionalists).

In Part Three, Stout develops further his claim that modern democracy is not primarily a celebration of secularism. It involves, rather, a “kind of pragmatism” that “can transcend the current standoff between secular liberals and new traditionalists—and do so by borrowing crucial insights of both sides.” Stout does yeoman’s work in articulating what “pragmatic expressivism” is all about. Unfortunately, at times his positive case falls into the rigidities he criticizes in liberal political philosophy; indeed, he lapses into the sort of abstract philosophic defense he argues that democracy does *not* in fact require. This may result from the fact that pragmatic expressivism is, by definition, a slippery thing; it wouldn’t be expressivism if it weren’t.

Stout proclaims his commitment to truth, hence, to a defensible “ethics without metaphysics.” Emerson and Whitman, among others, are called upon to shoulder this burden, too. The American democracy can consist of multiple ethical communities insofar as they share “a way of thinking and talking about ethical topics, or more precisely, a discursive social practice.” This is rather thin gruel, I fear, but Stout clearly believes it will suffice. He makes a good case that “democratic individuality,” which he endorses, is not to “be confused with atomistic dissolution of social life,” which he laments; and he believes the latter has been overdrawn in the “apocalyptic” tone of much postmodernism, including its new traditionalist forms.

TO BE SURE, DEMOCRACY’S FUTURE WILL be unpromising indeed “so long as . . . entrenched constituencies jointly control the political landscape,” for neither formalistic defenses of democracy, nor heated denunciations of it as nigh irredeemable, will do. Democracy’s survival demands that people “learn to think of themselves as individuals while identifying with a broader ethical inheritance and political community.” (Again he stands, as he tells us, with Emerson, Whitman, and Thoreau.) Such individuals, Whitmanesque citizens, will sustain “the social practices that matter most directly to democracy,” namely, “the discursive practices of ethical deliberation and political debate”

requiring that we all become “reason-givers.” This formulation sneaks in through the back door a big dose of “deliberative democracy” derived from the Rawlsians. But Stout shifts the requirements for what counts as reason-giving by opening the door to religious reasons so long as these reasons are but one among many.

Stout insists that one can reject Rawlsian liberalism without rejecting liberal democratic culture. This culture involves “substantive normative commitments” but “does not presume to settle in advance the ranking of our highest values.” Nor does democracy resolve the first and last questions of life, sin, and death. Stout’s democracy is a distinctly non-utopian project; he shares this view, although a far sunnier version of it, with those he calls “Augustinians,” from Reinhold Niebuhr to this reviewer. Stout’s book commends itself to all theorists of democracy and concerned citizens who would understand the current debates about democracy’s perils and possibilities.

But, truth to tell—and churlish as one may feel to say so—Stout’s defense of democracy is rather anemic on its own terms. The practices that flow from a community banding together to fight off a giant chain store or a smaller portion of that community supporting enthusiastically a child’s soccer team, aren’t quite the stuff out of which robust defenses of democracy are made—especially in a time when a war to the death has been proclaimed by democracy’s enemies.

Finally, the Emersonian “self-made man” is both too strenuous (“man alone” fighting for his individuality) and too weak (it is “man alone,” after all) to do the job Stout requires. And it is all a bit too nice—no doubt because Stout deploys “conversation” as the dominant metaphor for democratic culture. “Conversation” doesn’t really cut it for those for whom contemporary political contests are quite literally about life and death (abortion, capital punishment, cloning and stem cell research, etc.). They know, all too well, that the arguments they make will be chastised and rebuked as “conversation stoppers” by those who believe any articulation of first principles is unacceptable in democratic debate. Stout offers no way around or out of this dilemma.

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CHIVALRY NOW

The Compleat Gentleman: The Modern Man's Guide to Chivalry,
by Brad Miner. Spence Publishing, 272 pages, \$27.95

EDMUND BURKE'S FAMOUS PRONOUNCEMENT that "the age of chivalry is gone" was perhaps premature. Sure, ten thousand swords did not leap from the scabbards of the French nobility to defend Marie Antoinette, but such a betrayal did not mean that "the unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise" was forgotten in Britain, or America. More than two centuries later, the spirit of chivalry has not been entirely eradicated from the human heart, even in our pacifist, feminist, postmodern age.

While teaching both college and high school students, I have found nothing to electrify a classroom as much as the topic of chivalry, which I always introduce with the simple question, "Is chivalry dead?" The reasons for student interest are straightforward: young women are curious to see how men used to treat women in a more mannered and moral age, and young men, for their part, are painfully aware that in many respects they are less manly than their forefathers. These students have usually been given little instruction by their parents and teachers on what it means to be a man or a woman. Perhaps no other image, then, can appeal to them as much as the knight on horseback who will, for the sake of honor, fight any man, and still bow in deference to every lady.

And yet, the story of chivalry has not gotten out. Maurice Keen, Richard Barber, and Georges Duby have written excellent academic histories of chivalry, but these works are aimed at a scholarly audience and make no attempt to explore the relevance of chivalry for our own time. Medieval narratives, especially Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*, are often tough reading and Hollywood blockbusters like last summer's *King Arthur* or *A Knight's Tale* from a few years ago are utter disappointments. But now Brad Miner, an executive editor at Bookspan and former literary editor for *National Review*, has given us *The Compleat Gentleman*, an attempt to trace the chivalric tradition from medieval times to our own and to return contemporary manhood to its moorings in this gentlemanly tradition.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, lawless young men on horseback roamed the countryside in search of a fight. They threatened any semblance of order, and especially threatened women. Gradually, these young men became less dangerous by accepting the code of knight-

hood. They promised to display certain virtues: *loyauté, prouesse, largesse, courtoisie*, and *franchise*. In return, they might gain property by marrying the daughter of a lord. Or they might make a considerable fortune and win glory by testing their mettle in frequent tournaments. Miner offers interesting snapshots of the knight's training, the knighting ceremony, and tournaments. These last, in particular, were crucial to the development of chivalry, having "the dual virtues of providing both a means of testing a knight's prowess and of expiating his violent energies." And Miner reminds us that tournaments in the heyday of chivalry were not celebrated in the fashion of the confined jousts of either Scott's *Ivanhoe* or cinematic lore, but rather in the form of a *mêlée*, a massive battle lasting all day and often engaging hundreds or even thousands of knights. Injuries were frequent, and death was not uncommon.

While Miner offers the basic outlines of medieval chivalry, he fails to recount certain facts and anecdotes that might do more to win our hearts. For example, as courtly philosophy began increasingly to shape the ideal of knighthood, a knight could be barred from tournaments for any unchivalrous behavior, including deserting his lord in battle, destroying vineyards and cornfields, or repeating gossip about a lady. Can we imagine a sporting event today in which players who had "talked trash" about a girl would not be allowed on the field? Who would be left to play? Miner makes excellent observations on William Marshal, "the flower of chivalry," but most of his other character sketches amuse more than they impress. Other knights should have appeared in this book. Consider Maréchal Boucicaut who while in Genoa running the government of Charles VI, once bowed to two prostitutes, whom he did not know. His page said, "My lord, they are whores." Boucicaut responded, "I would rather have saluted ten whores than to have omitted saluting one respectable woman." Another good lesson for a culture that too often treats respectable women as "ho's."

MINER CLASSIFIES THE CHIVALROUS man as part warrior, part lover, and part monk, and addresses each aspect of this ideal in separate chapters. A reformed pacifist who prefers his sons to be Galahads rather than Gandhis, Miner clearly sees that a post-September 11 America is no

place for milquetoasts. We are living in a fallen world and bad men want to do bad things to us. We must be ready to respond in kind: "a gentleman really must face the reality of violence and not reject it, but like any warrior he will turn to violence only as a last resort."

The chapter on the lover is not nearly as inspiring. Miner does a good job of explaining how troubadours and assertive ladies with questionable sexual histories, such as Eleanor of Aquitaine, could establish the quasi-religion of courtly love. He is also forthright about the difficulty such love poses to all contemporary moralists who want to adopt chivalry as a model: knights and ladies were often adulterers, most famously Guinevere and Lancelot. But Miner never mentions Wolfram von Eschenbach, the 13th-century Bavarian knight who tried in his *Parzival* to reconcile courtly love with marriage. Nor does he say anything about the reforms of the 14th and 15th centuries, that sought to turn weak-willed knights into true gentlemen. And most curious of all, he ends a chapter about love with a discussion of women in combat. According to his rather strained logic, the true gentleman respects women and gives them what they want. If she is strong enough and willing, then today's "woman warrior" should be allowed to fight alongside today's chivalrous man.

Miner's treatment of the gentleman is likewise far from "compleat." He does relate the history of the gentleman, the successor to the knight, from the Renaissance onward, but unfortunately he sandwiches this chapter between his first chapter on the knight and his three chapters on the warrior, the lover, and the monk, which all return to medieval themes. As a result, he never shows any of the improvements or adjustments that the culture of the gentleman made on the original model, especially with regard to sexual mores. And too often he considers gentlemanly advice books as a true reflection of how actual men thought and acted. Such a selective use of sources is understandable for the Middle Ages, but the historical record is far richer in modern times. His handling of the 18th century is particularly lacking: he focuses on Lord Chesterfield's letters to his illegitimate son, a work which Miner himself tells us was considered by Samuel Johnson to "teach the morals of a whore, and the manners of a dancing master." Only by confusing the century of Washington and Hamilton and Burke with the letters of

Finally, Miner overlooks one vital aspect

of modern manliness altogether. His tripartite knight roughly corresponds to the medieval conception of the three orders in society: *oratores* (those who pray), *bellatores* (those who fight), and *laborares* (those who work). Yet he substitutes lovers for workers, leaving no place in his scheme for what most gentlemen do in modern times: work hard to provide for their families. Calling for a return to the warrior ethic in these times is certainly warranted. But in practical terms, not all of us can serve in the military. And as Adam Smith knew and

American history has shown, an industrialized power firm in its will and purpose will always prevail over a less developed enemy.

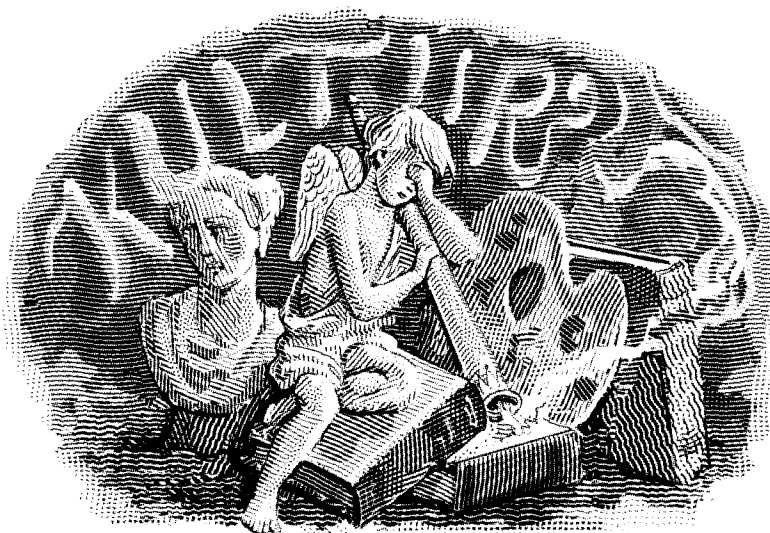
Despite its flaws, Brad Miner's book is a good introduction to chivalry and one hopes it will inaugurate a rich discussion over the qualities of true manliness. For that, we owe him our courteous thanks.

Terrence O. Moore, a former Marine and history professor, is principal of Ridgeview Classical Schools in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Book Review by Paul Johnson

BEAUTY BETRAYED

The Rape of the Masters: How Political Correctness Sabotages Art,
by Roger Kimball, Encounter Books, 200 pages, \$25.95



ONE OF THE CULTURAL TREASURES Britain lacks, and America happily possesses, is the monthly review *New Criterion*, which among other valuable duties keeps a watch against destructive contemporary trends in the arts and literature. Its managing editor is Roger Kimball. He is particularly keen to spot, analyze, and denounce unhealthy developments on the campus. Some years ago his book *Tenured Radicals* exposed the way in which ideological fanatics of the Left were hijacking university chairs to promote extremist politics, instead of giving the students entrusted to their care the education for which they, their parents, and the community had paid. This much-read and discussed book had a perceptible effect.

Kimball has now turned his attention to a particular and important aspect of this process: the teaching of art history in American universities. In America, as in the West generally, the study of art as a historical discipline has expanded enor-

mously in the last half-century, and now attracts large numbers of students, especially women. I am not sure whether this development is welcome. It does not necessarily reflect a growing love and understanding of art generally. Many students regard art history as a soft option, an entertaining way of passing the time before they move on to serious matters—getting a job, marriage, etc. Nor is it clear that there are enough university teachers of sufficient quality to cater to this increased demand for instruction in art history. After all, until the 1930s there was little serious study of the subject outside Germany, where it had deep roots in the 19th-century university system. In Britain and America, art history was largely written by wealthy amateurs like John Ruskin and Kenneth Clark, whose fortunes enabled them to do the traveling and on-the-spot investigations which raised them to professional status; or to those, like Bernard Berenson, who made a living in the art trade. (In

France there was a quite different tradition of literary men pronouncing on art, running from Diderot, via Baudelaire and the Goncourts, to André Malraux.) The real academic experts, beginning with E.M. Gombrich and Nicolas Pevsner, came from Germany as cultural immigrants, particularly after Hitler came to power in 1933. They brought not merely their persons but entire institutions: thus the Warburg Institute, Britain's first college of art study, was essentially a refugee from Hitler's terror. At the same time, about 350 German art historians emigrated to the United States, and the systematic study of art on U.S. campuses was the work of this diaspora.

These scholars and the people they taught were of high quality but necessarily few in number. Their teaching was by its nature personal, the handing on of affections, enthusiasms, and skills from one ardent art-lover to another, rather as the great painters and sculptors them-

selves had passed on the secrets of their trade in family workshops. The vast expansion of higher education in art, combined with the proliferation of museums and galleries, a huge increase in output from art publishers, made possible by the improvement in color photography and reproduction (and outsourcing of printing to Asia), and the impact of "blockbuster" exhibitions trumpeted by TV programs—all this has made it hard for art teaching of high quality to keep pace. As Kingsley Amis put it, 40 years ago, "More will mean worse." He referred to higher education as a whole but his words have particular application to art history. At one time, to teach art history at the college level required a knowledge of Italian and German—usually French too—and several years spent in Italy studying the Old Masters. The inflation of the subject, however, allowed large numbers of academics to secure positions without these qualifications. Instead they made do with "theory," which allows varieties of polysyllabic waffling to substitute for hard, detailed knowledge. To supply the need, this trend was imported into art history from literary criticism. It is a modern variety of Gnosticism: a form of inner knowledge that allows one to perceive, behind appearances, hidden truths and secrets. Outstanding practitioners were Marx and Freud, who claimed the ability to discern beneath the surface the realities about economics and politics, and the human spirit.

In the field of art history, Kimball traces this form of Gnosticism back to the German Marxists Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin. The latter's essay, "The Works of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Kimball says, "has become a kind of sacred text in literary and art historical studies," since it shifts the interest away from the object of art itself to its use as an instrument for transforming or defending the political and economic system. For art teachers with strong left-wing views, but whose grasp of the essentials of art history, including a passionate love of fine art, is shaky, this pedagogic trick came as a godsend. Instead of teaching art they could teach whatever they liked, bringing in at will their views on politics, economics, sex, gender, and religion. Much of the vocabulary, or jargon, for this technique had already been supplied by the French *intellectuels de choc*, Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan, and this means that what the new kinds of art historians are teaching can be camouflaged in layers of verbiage and mystification. Unfortunately, one or two senior art scholars provided a bad example—notably Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), a polymath who often strayed from the artworks he was contemplating into distant recesses of philosophy and his-

tory. One forgives Panofsky because he was so knowledgeable, so full of insights and because he so clearly loved the works he was descanting on. But, as the writings of Gombrich show, it is only by focusing directly and physically on the art-objects themselves that one learns anything worth knowing about them. A little of Panofsky's "iconology," as he called it, goes a long way.

KIMBALL ILLUSTRATES HIS CASE BY A series of examples that are worth summarizing. Thus, Prof. Keith Moxey, the Ann Whitney Olin Professor of Art History at Barnard College, argues that all culture must be related to theory and politics. He gives Hieronymus Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights* as an example of an artist truckling to the social, economic, and political views of the patrons who paid for it. In the real world of art history, of course, Bosch is an interesting case. We know disappointingly little about him but it has usually been assumed that he was trying to propound a moral lesson by emphasizing the horrors that await hardened sinners, though in a famous essay on this particular point (re-published in *The Heritage of Apelles*, 1976), Gombrich introduces the subversive thought that Bosch was trying to make his more sophisticated viewers laugh.

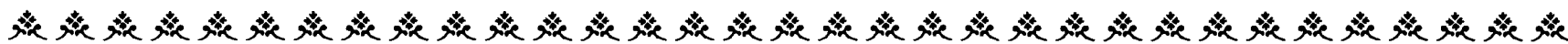
Then there is Prof. Michael Fried, the J.R. Herbert Boone Professor of Humanities at the John Hopkins University, who has crucified on the cross of his weird theories poor old Gustave Courbet, a painter who had plenty of problems of his own during his disturbed and unhappy life. It seems Courbet had a "propensity for calling into question the ontological impermeability of the bottom framing-edge." He also provided "an archetype of the perfect reciprocity between production and consumption that Karl Marx in the 'General Introduction' to the *Grundrisse* posited." Fried sees the battered old revolutionary hero as a feminist whose art was "structurally feminine." It is true that Courbet was the first artist to show a painting with an image of a woman's *pudenda* as its centerpiece, and displayed another, *The Bathers*, of a woman with an enormous bottom that shocked and baffled everybody. But the professor is not referring to these exercises but to Courbet's hunting pictures and, in particular, *The Quarry* (1856), the subject of which is two magnificent dogs, their owner, and a boy blowing his horn. This, mysteriously, is described as "another of Courbet's characteristically displaced and metaphorical representations of the activity, the mental and physical effort, of painting." Courbet is an exceptionally interesting painter, and the illuminating things which can be written about

his works are almost limitless. Why not show students this, instead of blinding them with Prof. Fried's pretentious nonsense?

Of Sargent's enchanting and virtuoso painting of *The Daughters of Edward Darley Boit* (1882), Prof. David M. Lubin, the Charlotte C. Weber Professor of Art at Wake Forest University, says it is an unhappy psychodrama fraught with exploitation, anxiety, and tension. He adds, arrogantly, that it does not matter "whether Sargent meant it this way or not." Prof. Griselda Pollock, who is at Leeds University, where she is Director of the Centre for Cultural Studies, the Centre for Jewish Studies, and Graduate Studies and Research in Feminist Theory, History, and Art—amazing the way these people accumulate titles!—sees Gauguin's works and especially his *Spirit of the Dead Watching* (a black sleeping nude with dream symbols) as a case of colonialist, masculine, and capitalist exploitation, in addition to being racist and sexist. Manet's *Olympia*, to which she compares it, is "a representation of the spaces of bourgeois masculinity where working women's bodies are bought and sold.... The painting signifies commodity, capital's penetration of bodies and desires." Winslow Homer's magnificent animated seascape, *The Gulf Stream* (1899), which has attracted a lot of comment over the years, usually intelligent or at least intelligible, has led Nicolai Cikovsky, another of the new genre of art historians, to say that it evinces "an almost Schopenhauerian philosophical preference," and to compare the sharks encircling the boat to castrating temptresses, their mouths particularly resembling the *vagina dentate*, the toothed sexual organ that so forcefully expressed the male fear of female aggression." Cikovsky adds: "Homer's fear of women was so strong... that he could not fully repress it." From here it is easy for Svetlana Alpers, Professor of Art History at the University of California, Berkeley, to describe Rubens's magnificent piece of disgusted horror-bravado, *Drunken Silenus* (1618), as an allegory of anal rape.

The tragedy of this and other cases of perverted art history, which not only obstruct the truth but may damage irreparably the capacity of sensitive students to love great art, is that some of the teachers invoked, Alpers for instance, once did good work, though none of those Kimball cites has ever been first-class. His exposure of this kind of art teaching is timely and welcome, and I hope that the trustees and benefactors of universities where such travesties of scholarship occur will read this book and take action.

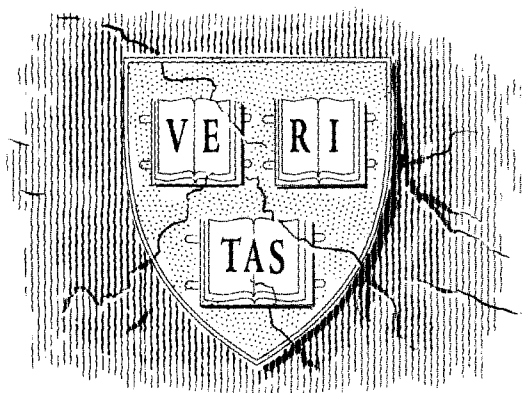
Paul Johnson is the author of Art: A New History (HarperCollins).



CUM DIGNITATE OTIUM

A MORE DEMANDING CURRICULUM

by Harvey C. Mansfield



Editor's Note: A version of this article appeared in the collection, *Essays on General Education in Harvard College*, published by Harvard's Office of the Curricular Review. It was commissioned by William C. Kirby, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, who asked colleagues to offer their vision of a liberal arts education at the start of the 21st century. The essays are part of a major review of Harvard's undergraduate curriculum.

OUR CURRICULUM IS WHAT WE, THE FACULTY, CHOOSE TO put before our students. It is what we collectively choose. Individually, we choose courses to teach that arise from our research and that we expect will forward it, and also courses that we think students want or ought to have in the subfields for which we take responsibility. These individual courses reflect a sense of duty; they are not simply personal whims or eccentricities or ways to shine. They are meant to be contributions to the whole and they are thought out as such. But they are not a curriculum resulting from a common deliberation as to what students ought to learn or have available to learn. We are now engaged in a common deliberation for the purpose of bringing our individual choices together so that they make sense to us as a faculty and not only to each of us as individual professors.

To see where we are now, let's look at the two curricular reviews we have had not quite within living memory—one for general education in 1945 and another for the core program prior to 1978, when the core was instituted. General education was presented in a book, the once-famous Red Book—*General Education in a Free Society*—that should still impress readers in our time. The Red Book has an introduction by President James Bryant Conant, who appointed the committee of stalwarts—administrators and professors—who put together the curriculum and wrote the report initiating and explaining “general education.” With the strong leadership of the president, the report was designed for cohesion and achieved it. It was designed ambitiously not only for Harvard but also for “a free society” in which, of course, Harvard would be a leader not only of private higher education but of all education, public and private, from primary schools (discussed in the report) to graduate education. Throughout, the authors made reference to the requirements and hopes of American democracy.

General Education and the Red Book

WHAT WAS “GENERAL EDUCATION”? IT WAS THE SAME AS “liberal education,” and it referred above all to what should be common in our education. The advance of science, it was seen, came through specialization, which resulted in more specialization; the danger was that the modern university's specialties would bring it to disregard what was and needed to be common to learning. Because specialized learning is so abstruse, the university could no longer communicate with fellow citizens. Perhaps more embarrassing, members of the faculty could not understand one another, and the university couldn't communicate with itself.

The Red Book did not assume that general education was easy to achieve. It identified problems in education as such, some of them intensified in a democracy: how to combine the citizen and the whole man; how to serve both the gifted (traced to Thomas Jefferson's insistence on promoting the talented) and the average (championed by Andrew Jackson); how to reconcile the practice of free inquiry with the need for “firm belief” by both the gifted and the average; and the related difficulty of seeking new insights while preserving tradition. It also squarely faced the difference between science, or natural science, on the one hand, and the social sciences and the humanities, on the other—a general problem that I think was the greatest concern of President Conant and his committee.

Science, said the Red Book, is progressive and exact. As progressive, science replaces earlier findings thought to be knowledge with current findings. From the strict standpoint of science, it makes no sense to study the history of science. If Galileo were to return to the land of the living, he would accept the changes in his findings as improvements. His



acceptance and the agreement in the scientific community characteristic of modern science are a consequence of the exactness of modern science, which in the best case leaves no room for doubt. Social sciences and the humanities, on the other hand, are neither progressive nor exact. "Goethe does not render Sophocles obsolete, nor does Descartes supersede Plato." No doubt many lesser figures of the past are lost in oblivion; and there could easily be agreement that these four are great thinkers worth studying. But they are worth studying because these four differ among themselves and offer views still necessary to consider.

Science and Postmodernism

PRESIDENT CONANT WAS A SCIENTIST WHO WAS ALSO INVOLVED with politics as head of the Manhattan Project, which produced the atom bomb. He was particularly concerned with the difficulty of conveying the abstruse precision of science to non-scientists, a problem we have not yet solved today. The abstruseness of science—its distance from common sense—could not be dismissed by a non-scientist because science, together with all its many benefits, had made a bomb that was impossible to ignore. It happened that as a freshman in 1949 I took a course given by President Conant (Natural Sciences 4) intended to address this difficulty and to overcome the distance between scientific and non-scientific understanding. This course aimed to generalize the methods of scientific hypothesizing and thus make available the essence of science while freeing science from the abstruseness of particular sciences. It was not quite the history of science, nor was it the philosophy of science; it was something like the common practice of science. The idea was to look at science apart from its particular results, such as the difference between a gene and a genome, because these results are only temporary and do not get to the essence of science as an enterprise.

What happened in this course illustrates the fate of general education in the Harvard faculty. The course was meant to bridge the gap between science and non-science, thus making our Harvard curriculum successfully "general." Instead, the reverse occurred and the gap became more pronounced. One of the teachers in Natural Sciences 4 was Thomas Kuhn, who later wrote *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, a book that became famous, much more famous than the now-forgotten Red Book. He argued that science consisted of dominant theories or "paradigms" that were not so much refuted as replaced by new paradigms. Scientists orient themselves by the "normal science" of their time, and scientific agreement is produced by common, induced belief more than by acceptance of the greater exactness in new findings. Science therefore has "progressed"—we now have to use quotation marks—more by the political means of domination than by the unfolding discovery of truth.

So much for the success of a curriculum. The attempt of a scientist to explain himself to non-scientists was taken over by one of the latter and made into the landmark postmodern criticism of science. Of course, there were other sources of postmodernism and other reasons for the gradual decay of general education in practice and belief. Still, Kuhn himself became one of his paradigms, though among non-scientists. I don't know that he had any effect on scientists. The result was to reduce the claim to specialness from science. Instead of a fundamental heterogeneity between science and non-science, creating the main problem for American higher education, there was a diversity of fields in which no such fundamental heterogeneity could be discerned. The only problem was that non-science students had much more trouble with science—finding its exactness too exacting—than science students had with non-science.

The Core Curriculum and Choice

HENCE THE CORE CURRICULUM. I HAVE DWELT ON GENERAL education because the core program is best understood as a privative defined by what it lacks more than by any positive idea of its own. Its only positive idea was the requirement for moral reasoning, promoted by President Derek Bok as a counter to the unreasoned moral outrage of the 1960s that we had all experienced. There was not much confidence, however, that more reasoning would make you more moral; the hope, I believe, was that reasoning might make you more civil, or at least more deliberate, more cautious—hence less self-righteous? No, that would be hoping too much.

The core curriculum never defined a core. Generated from the faculty rather than promoted, still less imposed, from above, it produced a vague consensus of the most powerful departments. Core areas were carefully not named for departments but they were close enough to departments to gain their consent. The core has been a professors' curriculum based on the premise that what professors want to teach is the same as what students need to know, and which society needs them to know. In fact, the core has been better than that, better than its lack of theory might have portended. The prestige of teaching in the core—rather than languishing in the periphery!—has been an attraction for the more ambitious professors, and the need for getting the consent of a core committee has kept them from simply teaching their pet ideas, as tended to happen in the later stages of general education. But in too many cases the idea of *not teaching something necessary to know* has imposed itself. Some angle must be found that will look interesting to students not mainly interested in the subject-matter of the course. Thus the professors' curriculum tended to become a curriculum designed to appeal to students. After a while that appeal began to fade, and the students who flocked to core courses in huge numbers began to hold them in disdain.

The premise of the core, as I said, is choice. Since two parties are involved, faculty and students, there must be a coincidence between their two choices; and that is what the core supplied. "Approaches" to knowledge rather than knowledge itself were featured because these were the choices faculty had made for their careers and because students should not object to having their choices guided and constrained by the fields of their teachers. Anyway, "approaches" were not quite the same as departments, and there was plenty of choice for courses within each approach. It is easy to fall into the habit of speaking of "approaches" without completing the phrase to say what they are approaching, namely, knowledge. Despite the fact that "approach" means nothing without specifying the substance being approached, it was convenient not to mention the substantive knowledge aimed at or attained in each approach. It was a way to present, i.e., disguise, the abandonment by the core program of the goal that general education had set for itself of acquiring the most fundamental knowledge or understanding the most fundamental problems. The problem of reconciling science and non-science that I believe was crucial for general education disappeared into a flux of the diverse approaches, and neither science nor non-science was required to defend itself against the other. The approaches became sovereign perspectives, each declared valid in 1978, none of them having to explain itself, but charged only with the lesser task of illustrating itself in some way that will be found interesting by students.

It is not only in the curriculum that Harvard lives by a regime of choice. The same is true of food and sex for the undergraduates.

Choice's advantage is that it is not imposed, or apparently not imposed; and students think better of the courses they take for having chosen them for themselves. You will be slow to diss the professor when doing so compels you to admit you were a fool for taking the course. This is psychology. But there is also a drawback to choice in its seeming promise that you will be satisfied. Lots of choice of food in the cafeteria easily makes students more choosy rather than more satisfied. Give out condoms and you imply, don't you, that there will be generous opportunity to put them to use? It's the same with courses. Despite the almost unbelievably large number of courses offered, finding that fourth course every semester gets harder and harder for students as they move towards graduation. Nothing is quite right for me; so I flock to courses that everyone else seems to like. This is the invisible authority of democratic opinion that leads to frustration and grumbling and fosters the sense of being put upon, notwithstanding that array of choice.

Student Wants and Needs

WE ARE NOW, AT LAST, UP TO THE PRESENT. IT MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED, for a start, that we are not going to do away with choice. We faculty want it, and so do our students. But from what I hear, students after the experience of the core would like to have more substance in their education. Let us give it more substance—but not because students are demanding more substance. To provide substance we must see to it that our curriculum does not become an agency merely to facilitate students' choices. We must try to influence and form their choices. Let us declare then that we think, on our own, that there is a difference between an educated person and one who is merely socialized.

Education is a choice divided into two aspects: what students want and what students should have. These are two different things, but neither can exclude the other. What students want should not be accepted without revision, nor on the other hand should it be denied them merely because they want it. What they should have needs to be connected to what they want even though the two will never coincide. What students want for their education comes spontaneously from them; what students should have has to be imposed or at least offered insistently against the flow of their desires. What students want spontaneously at this time is going to be influenced by two forces that need to be resisted by the faculty.

Partisanship is one. Most of our students arrive with, or soon acquire, liberal political inclinations, and these need to be countered by experience with arguments from the other side and also by courses that teach students detachment, from their own or even from any political inclination. The latter would be courses with depth, requiring thought that goes beyond the present and avoids a policy focus; and depth can be comparative, theoretical, or historical.

The second is risk-avoidance for the sake of a future career or to enhance the prospect of getting admitted to the top graduate and professional schools. There is a pressing need to make our curriculum more demanding, and this should be a major goal of our curriculum review. Students should be asked to give more time to their courses and less time to extra-curricular activities. Just as students seem to be looking for more substance in the curriculum, so too they sense that Harvard has become too easy. Here, quoted at length, is the judgment of a member of the class of 2002, Ross Gregory Douthat, in a forthcoming book about his Harvard education:

It was hard work to get into Harvard, and then it was hard work competing for offices and honors with thousands of brilliant and driven young people, hard work keeping your head in the competitive world of extracurriculars, hard work keeping your soul

in the swirling social world, hard work fighting for law-school slots and I-banking jobs as college wound to a close...yes, it was heavy sledding all around.

But the academics—no, the academics were the easy part.

This situation we need to address, and we should look for a combination of inducements and requirements that makes Harvard more demanding of its students. It goes without saying, as a necessary accompaniment to a more demanding curriculum, that we should put an end to the scandal of grade inflation at the nation's number one university. And not by declaring our 51% A's and A-'s to be fine and dandy.

Coursework

NOW I HAVE SOME MORE PARTICULAR RECOMMENDATIONS inspired by these reflections on recent history.

More Science. Here is a problem. Science is always on the move, as I said above, replacing its old discoveries with new findings. Does it make sense to teach the present results of science when they may be obsolete soon after the student graduates? But if it does not, is there some way to capture the essence of science and teach that? Or is the so-called essence of science not really science but the history or philosophy of science and real science is the practice of scientists? Real science requires more mathematics than most non-scientists have or desire. Should the necessary mathematics be crammed down their throats? What can one say of science to those outside it—necessarily a non-mathematical communication?

I don't have a solution. But as a non-scientist I do think that part of our preferred or required curriculum should feature the relationship of science to non-science. There should be a course in the history and/or philosophy of science, or else a science course, that treats the relationship of science to common sense, and connected to this, the relationship of science to religion. The advance of science, typified by stem cell research and cloning that approach or enter into the chambers of human dignity, is going to be an ever more pressing issue (as we saw in the 2004 election campaign).

Internationalism. We can be sure that America's responsible role in the world or America's imperialist temptation—take your choice—will be of spontaneous interest to our students and to us. This material is familiar to us in the clusters of questions associated with multiculturalism and globalization. But now we face Islamic radicalism, which casts doubt on the ready reception or absorption of foreign nations and cultures into our country, *a fortiori* into our understanding of the world. In theory we say the world is diverse, in practice we act as if we believe it to be homogeneous. Is there such a thing as an enemy, a real Other that we cannot and ought not tolerate?

Internationalism in some form is something students want to study, but the foreign languages they need may not be universally or immediately attractive. We should continue and strengthen our requirements in foreign languages.

America. The proposed emphasis on international relations falls into the category of things students spontaneously want. We also need to make sure that they understand their own country. Far too little is taught about America at Harvard. The Government department has too few courses on America; little on the Supreme Court, for example, and less on American foreign policy. The History department has no course on the American Revolution or on the American Founding. Courses in American history and politics should be part of the recommended or required part of the curriculum.

Religion. Religion is not sufficiently taught to undergraduates and



should not only be present but central in our curriculum. I have mentioned the relationships between religion and science and between religion and internationalism. These are aspects of the relationship between reason and revelation, a fundamental question hardly raised in our complacently secular education. This could be addressed in a course on the history of philosophy, or another on the history of political philosophy, or one on the history of religion or of Christianity.

The Military. Here is another subject we do not teach enough. In fact it is hardly taught at all, except for a couple of courses in Government. The military is set aside—not even criticized—in the complacently pacifist education we deliver to our students. There ought to be a Harvard College course in the military, in military history, or in the relationship of the military to society, economics, politics. Yale has a course on Grand Strategy that has been praised.

In considering topics of a more substantive curriculum, especially religion and the military, I am not assuming that the faculty can remain as it is. No, there need to be more professors in religion and in the military. We should not be taking the present composition of the faculty for granted, and then looking for what it can do or wants to do. That was the mistake of the Core; it took for granted the diverse approaches the bigger departments could agree on and called it an education. When in the construction of the Core the Department of History found it was left out, it banged noisily on the door and was let in. Obviously, we cannot make a curriculum for ourselves that the faculty does not want to teach, but equally, we need to consider whether we have let things drift so that matters of the greatest importance are slighted.

Beautiful Things. A vulgar person is one who has no experience with beautiful things. We should not be graduating vulgar persons. We should have Harvard College courses on the history of fine arts and the history of music. Our students should be able to glance at Littauer and say to themselves, “Hmm. Six Roman Ionic columns.” If they cannot love Mozart, they should know what he sounds like and what he was trying to do.

History of Science. There should be a Harvard College course in the History of Science, especially one that considers the difference between pre-modern and modern science. The period of the founding of a science is of special interest because it is there, before its principles are taken for granted, that the science is revealed in its true light as a bold and polemical reinterpretation of the meaning of nature. It’s true as I said above that a scientist as such does not care about the history of his subject, but from a broader viewpoint that includes the impact of science and the nature of science as a human enterprise, its history is essential. Something similar could be said for the history of mathematics. I would also like to mention that the Economics department has been remiss in not teaching the history of economics—and for quite some time, perhaps even since the death of Joseph Schumpeter.

Modernity. Here is a fundamental topic on which there should be several Harvard College courses. Modernity might be quickly defined as the notion of rational control by humans of human life rather than piously or philosophically accepting the rule of God or nature. It is a creation of the West, and it has proved so powerful that all other cultures have had to accept it or adjust to it or, like the Islamic radicals, try to oppose it. Nobody can simply dismiss it from consideration. And yet modernity is not happy with itself, as we see in many movements today on the Left and the Right. So nobody can simply accept it, either, as a non-controversial good. Modernity is the fundamental

condition of our life today, and our students need to be made aware of its promise and its troubles.

Western Civilization. Western Civ needs to be taught, if only for the power it has shown in dominating the world. But to avoid the objection that it is too self-centered a topic, it could be treated from the angle of modernity as above or of greatness as below. A course that begins with Homer and ends somewhere in the vicinity of Nietzsche, with selected stops between, still makes lots of sense. Such a course can find room for our concerns for minorities and women without being dominated by those concerns (I believe Homer has something to say about both of them).

Moral reasoning. Despite my irreverence above, moral reasoning is the best part of the Core and we should retain it as a requirement. It should be kept as a way to ensure that great books are read, for most of the Moral Reasoning courses have had to include Aristotle and Kant and a few others of their class. Our students still suffer from superficial, unreasoning moralism, and President Bok was right to think a course in Moral Reasoning would be beneficial all around.

Better Writing. I do not say “creative writing,” because that is rare. What we can do is to teach good writing from various examples of the best writing. Students should learn to analyze style and to look for the writer’s intent behind the style chosen. What writing is appropriate to what occasion? Unfortunately, a budding profession has appeared of freshman English instructors. They care little for style and less for substance, and their exemplary writers come almost entirely from the present. They don’t know or teach grammar or spelling. What we need for the job is a collection of pedants and taskmasters.

With better writing goes, like, better speaking. Harvard should teach rhetoric, and in course of doing so, sponsor more formal debate than we hear these days. How does one make a persuasive speech?

Greatness. President Lawrence Summers has used this word to describe one goal of curriculum review. We must not be afraid to make judgments of greatness in our teaching, explicit or not, and we should show students how to recognize it in its diversity. Relativism is not a crazy position to hold if it means that we lack proof of the major conflicting principles guiding our lives, but it is debilitating if it induces us to level all principles, equating petty and great, and thus dismiss greatness from our view. I believe in the great books because I think that all human thoughts derive from these few masters, *i maestri di color che sanno*. But the derivations are interesting too, more relevant and urgent, and we don’t want to become another great books college.

These are my thoughts. They are, to return to my beginning, an individual contribution to a collective deliberation, thus limited by my experience and no doubt in other ways too. I have dwelt on the justification of a curriculum and have perhaps in this brief essay given out too much high talk on first principles. But I was taken with the Red Book when I reread it and contrasted its depth and comprehensiveness with the lack of those qualities in the 1970s discussion (as I remembered it) preceding institution of the Core. In the past two years as well, I have not heard much talk of “general education in a free society.” We should have, and we should convey, a sense of the direction in which we want to go.

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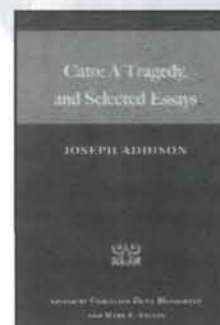
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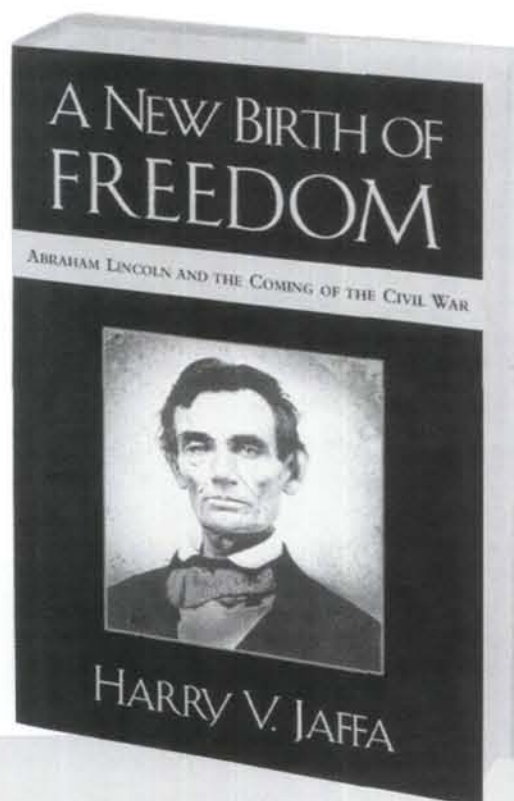
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In this Issue

In many respects, [the Bush Doctrine] is the export version of compassionate conservatism.... "The power of liberty to transform lives and nations," Bush admonishes, should not be underestimated. But it may be that the administration underestimates the difficulty of converting whole societies in the Middle East into functioning democracies. By raising expectations—by making democracy appear as an easier conversion and way of life than it really is—Bush risks not only the erosion of liberal and pro-democratic support within Iraq, but also at home a loss of public confidence in the whole war effort.

Charles R. Kesler

"Democracy and the Bush Doctrine"

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